RESEARCH REPORT

ETHNICITY AND CULTURE IN TENANT PARTICIPATION:

AN ASSISTED HOUSING COMMUNITY IN TORONTO

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Part IX research report

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April 1998

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PURPOSE

Immigration from every part of the world is a major factor in the demographic evolution of Canada. Most immigrants settle in one of three major centres, the most popular being Toronto. Many immigrant families have low incomes for a variety of reasons. As a result, they may often choose to live in housing that receives some form of government assistance, along with other families of the same or different cultural background. The concern is that these families could be faced with barriers to participating in the local community due to their cultural and ethnic diversity. Very little research has been documented to date on these possible barriers to community participation.

Do these barriers exist? And if so, could fuller participation be achieved for ethnically diverse residents in assisted housing? This study was undertaken to help address these questions by looking at how residents participated in one ethnically diverse community.

ABSTRACT

This case study looks at possible barriers to community participation that are specifically related to cultural and ethno-racial diversity and suggests strategies that have the potential to enhance participation. The setting for the study is a government assisted housing project in Toronto where the residents include a large number of immigrant families from many different cultural backgrounds.

The study used census and school enrollment data to profile the residents of the assisted housing and the surrounding community. Questions related to current levels of resident participation and the barriers to a more representative involvement were developed with input from property managers, staff and residents. These were distributed as a questionnaire to a sample of households within the assisted housing units. Interviews were also used to collect information. The data was used to group respondents according to their broad ethnic background. Analysis of responses consisted mainly of cross-tabulation of responses by ethnic groups.

The study showed that the main barriers to participation were a lack of knowledge about rights in the community, a perception that meetings were not effective and that nothing would be done about issues, and feelings of isolation and lack of confidence. However, these issues were not specific to any particular group and were not directly related to diversity. A few minor barriers which did have their origins in diversity were also noted.

The study concluded that, by and large, the main barriers were a matter of perception resulting from different expectations of the various cultural groups, management, staff and youth. There were also many straightforward actions that could be taken that would help close the gaps in expectations, and that these could be combined into five strategic approaches centred on: meetings, information dissemination, relationship building, involvement of cultural groups, and involvement of youth.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As the principal researcher, I wanted to produce a complete and useful study for the residents so that their co-operation and efforts could be put to good use and their participation would be shown to have been taken seriously. This sense of respect should help build a good foundation for further community development in the future. Moreover, the overall awareness of residents and staff has been increased. While the study may not be able to solve all their issues, its findings should contribute to the community's growth, and perhaps to other communities as well. This study will also add to the body of literature relating to barriers to participation. Other studies have taken place in this community but have not been published - to the disappointment of the residents who had participated.

A study of this nature requires a considerable amount of effort, and could not be done without the assistance of a great many people. I would like to thank those who spent time to understand the objectives of the study, the purpose of the research, and the benefits of involvement. Many residents helped me understand about residents' issues and it was very inspiring to be given an opportunity to learn about their experiences and their community. I would like to thank Yohannes Gebre-Selassie, Gosie Gudeta and Lynne Rogers for their insights and their assistance in developing the questionnaire for Phase II.

A number of individuals were instrumental in bringing this study to a completion. I would like to thank Phil Brown, of CMHC, for his role in initiating this study and providing guidance throughout the various phases of the study. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Flemingdon Park Study Committee for their assistance, supervision and advice throughout the course of the research. In particular, I would like to thank: Phil Deacon and Bruce Hynes, of CMHC; Denyse Ashford, of OHC; Ross Paterson, of Cityhome; and Lou Canton, of MTHA, and Sharon Williams and Ingrid Romanek of Greenwin Property Management, who helped me understand the community's history and the community dynamics. I am grateful to Ross Paterson for the research that he contributed to this study. I would also like to thank David Hulchanski and Joseph Michalski, of University of Toronto, for conducting a comprehensive literature review.

But perhaps what impressed me most was the underlying goodwill and tolerance of the residents. Despite differences of language, dress, cultural beliefs, politics and religion, the majority of residents felt that the larger community accepted them.

I.P.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Immigration from every part of the world is a major factor in the demographic evolution of Canada.. Many immigrant families choose to live in a community where the housing receives some form of government assistance because, for a variety of reasons, they arrive with little wealth and a low income potential at least in the short term. Other families from different parts of the worls and with different cultural background arrive in the same economic circumstances and may make the same choice in where to live. The concern is that these families could be faced with barriers to participating in the local community due to their cultural and ethnic diversity.

This study combined a literature review and a case study. Possible barriers to community participation were investigated with a focus on cultural and ethno-racial diversity. Potential strategies are suggested to enhance participation. The setting for the case study was a government assisted housing project in Toronto where the resident population included a significant proportion of immigrant families from many different cultural backgrounds. A questionnaire was prepared with the help of a focus group which included residents. This was distributed to a sample of the residents and was followed up with interviews.

Findings

The literature review found that little research had been done in the specific area of ethnic or cultural barriers in the context of housing and resident participation, but that there had been a substantial amount of related literature (management science, education and health care). The review categorized sources of barriers into three groups: primary variables (almost impossible to change) that influence human behaviour, secondary variables (can change over time), and characteristics of the organizational or institutional structure. Although research has identified these as potential barriers, it has little to say on which were the most important or what the interactions might be. The review also identified a number of strategies for overcoming barriers.

In analysing the responses from the case study, two main groupings of residents stood out: those whose ethnic origins are African-Caribbean, and those whose origins are Caucasian. The remaining residents had highly diverse origins with no single grouping large enough for analysis (they were collectively called "other" for the analysis).

Participation was found to be highest among those who have been the community for more than six years. Because Caribbean and Caucasian

residents generally had been residents longer, they also participated more than residents in the 'other' category.

Key observations are listed below.

current levels of resident participation

- leadership tended to be taken over by groups of longer-term residents and those with highest fluency in English
- people attended meetings mostly if they felt the issues discussed directly concerned them
- some residents became excluded from some social events because of cultural issues, such as food selection or preparation, or religious festivals or practices and this may have affected their comfort in participating at other events and meetings
- residents who were the most vocal participants did not necessarily represent those who were not vocal

barriers to involvement

The following factors were most often mentioned as barriers:

- a pattern of failure to complete projects or resolve issues,
- power struggles and community divisions over issues,
- fear of personal repercussions for voicing unpopular opinions,
- too many studies and too few results,
- a lack of sensitivity to cultural issues, such as meeting times and appropriate activities,
- lack of sufficient fluency in English to allow full participation in open meetings.

strategies to enhance participation

The following ideas were most often put forward or agreed with as leading to greater participation:

- make the meetings formal and regular, with notice, agendas and a strong facilitator,
- ensure the process is open and fair,
- work for speedy resolution of issues,
- use a special representative in each small area to spread information by word of mouth,

- use a community bulletin board,
- use flyers, especially with a consistent, identifiable logo,
- take measures to reach each ethnic group, such as through designated leaders,
- take action to ensure everyone can be heard.

Conclusions

Overall, the study suggested that the main barriers to participation were a lack of knowledge about the rights to participate in the community, a perception that residents' meetings were not effective at dealing with community issues, and feelings of isolation and lack of confidence. These issues were not specific to any particular group and were not directly related to diversity. .

In light of this, the most effective strategies to enhance participation are not specifically related to cultural diversity. They are those that can be probably found in any community that exhibits meagre participation. This does not mean that participation issues are any easier to solve. Many of the issues identified in a previous (1991) workshop with Flemingdon Park residents were still present in the community at the time of the research. For example, in 1991 residents had cited a need for good leadership at meetings and good facilitation of them.

Nonetheless, some strategies related to diversity could be put in place, such as ensuring food served at social events would not interfere with religious observance. There could also be more sensitivity to needs of specific groups in setting times of meetings and social events, such as taking into consideration their prayer times.

Résumé

Contexte

La venue au pays d'immigrants des quatre coins du monde est un facteur déterminant de l'évolution démographique du Canada. De nombreuses familles d'immigrants choisissent de s'établir dans des collectivités où les logements sont subventionnés par le gouvernement, et ce pour toutes sortes de raisons, soit parce que leur santé est précaire ou qu'ils disposent de revenus modestes, au moins au début. D'autres familles, en provenance d'autres régions du globe et ayant une culture différente, sont dans la même situation économique et font aussi le choix de vivre dans le même type de collectivités. Le problème c'est que toutes ces familles pourraient faire face à des obstacles les empêchant de participer à la vie communautaire de leur quartier en raison de leur diversité culturelle et ethnique.

Cette étude est à la fois une analyse documentaire et une étude de cas. On y examine les entraves possibles à la participation communautaire, en se centrant plus particulièrement sur la diversité culturelle et ethno-raciale, et on propose des stratégies pour encourager la participation. L'étude de cas porte sur un ensemble de logements subventionnés par le gouvernement et occupés en grande partie par des familles d'immigrants ayant des racines culturelles très diverses. Avec l'aide d'un groupe de travail composé aussi de résidents, on a préparé un questionnaire que l'on a distribué à un échantillon d'habitants du quartier, puis on a procédé à une série d'entrevues.

Resultats

L'analyse documentaire a permis de conclure que peu d'études s'étaient penchées sur les barrières ethniques ou culturelles en ce qui a trait au logement et à la participation des résidents à la vie communautaire, mais qu'il y avait énormément de documents connexes (science de la gestion, éducation et soins de santé). La recherche a donné lieu à la création de trois catégories d'obstacles : les variables primaires (presque impossibles à modifier) qui influencent le comportement humain; les variables secondaires (qui peuvent changer avec le temps); et les caractéristiques de la structure organisationnelle ou institutionnelle. Même si la recherche a permis de déceler ces obstacles potentiels, elle ne révèle pratiquement rien sur l'importance de chacun, ni sur la forme d'interaction privilégiée. Elle a quand même permis d'élaborer un certain nombre de stratégies pour surmonter ces obstacles.

En analysant les réponses obtenues dans le cadre de l'étude de cas, on s'aperçoit que deux groupes de résidents ressortent du lot : ceux d'origine afro-caribéenne et ceux d'origine caucasienne. Le reste des habitants sont d'origines trop diverses pour former un groupe représentatif digne d'être

étudié (pour les besoins de l'analyse, on les désignera par le terme collectif « les autres »).

On a remarqué que ceux qui étaient établis dans la communauté depuis plus de six ans affichaient le niveau de participation le plus élevé. De même, les résidents d'origine caribéenne et caucasienne, installés dans le quartier depuis plus longtemps, participaient plus que les autres.

Voici les principales observations effectuées au terme de l'analyse.

Niveaux actuels de participation des résidents

- Le leadership semble être exercé par les groupes constitués de résidents de longue date et ayant une meilleure maîtrise de l'anglais.
- Les gens assistent aux réunions surtout s'ils considèrent que les sujets abordés les touchent directement.
- Plusieurs résidents ont été exclus d'activités sociales pour des raisons culturelles (choix et préparation des aliments, fêtes ou pratiques religieuses) et cela pourrait les dissuader de participer à d'autres événements ou rencontres.
- Les résidents les plus prolixes ne représentent pas nécessairement la majorité silencieuse.

Obstacles à la participation

Voici les facteurs cités le plus souvent comme étant des obstacles :

- impossibilité de réaliser des projets ou de résoudre des problèmes;
- luttes de pouvoirs et divisions au sein de la communauté à propos de certains enjeux;
- crainte de représailles pour avoir exprimé publiquement des opinions impopulaires;
- trop d'études et pas assez de résultats;
- manque de sensibilité aux questions culturelles, comme les rassemblements et les activités particulières;
- maîtrise insuffisante de l'anglais pour permettre une pleine participation à des réunions ouvertes.

Stratégies pour encourager la participation

Voici les idées mises de l'avant le plus souvent et celles ayant été reconnues valables pour faire augmenter la participation :

- organiser des réunions formelles sur une base régulière en suivant un ordre du jour; choisir un animateur expérimenté, et prévenir les gens à l'avance de la tenue d'une rencontre.
- Veiller à ce que le processus soit ouvert et équitable.
- Faire avancer les dossiers pour résoudre rapidement les problèmes.
- Désigner un représentant spécial pour chaque zone afin de diffuser l'information au moyen du bouche à oreille.
- Utiliser un tableau d'affichage communautaire.
- Distribuer des prospectus sur lesquels est imprimé un logo facilement reconnaissable.
- Prendre des dispositions pour atteindre chaque groupe ethnique, y compris en se servant de représentants désignés.
- Prendre des mesures pour que tout le monde soit entendu.

Conclusions

Globalement, l'étude révèle que les principaux obstacles à la participation des résidents à la vie de quartier tiennent au manque de connaissance de ce droit dans la communauté, à l'impression que les réunions de résidents ne peuvent permettre de résoudre efficacement les problèmes de la collectivité, au sentiment d'isolement et à un certain manque de confiance. Ces observations ne s'appliquent pas à un groupe en particulier et ne sont pas directement liées à la diversité.

À la lumière de cela, les stratégies les plus efficaces pour accroître la participation des gens ne sont pas nécessairement liées à la diversité culturelle. Ce sont probablement les mêmes que l'on mettrait en œuvre dans n'importe quelle collectivité où les membres sont peu engagés dans la vie communautaire. Cela ne signifie pas que les problèmes de participation sont plus faciles à résoudre. Beaucoup des difficultés évoquées par la communauté lors d'un précédent atelier avec des résidents de Flemingdon Park (en 1991) n'étaient pas encore résolues au moment de la dernière étude. Par exemple, en 1991, les résidents avaient insisté sur la nécessité de tenir des réunions bien dirigées.

Quoi qu'il en soit, plusieurs stratégies reliées à la diversité pourraient être mises en place, comme celle qui consiste à servir des repas qui satisfont les gens de toutes confessions religieuses lors d'activités sociales. On pourrait également davantage tenir compte des exigences de groupes spécifiques dans l'organisation de telles activités, notamment en ce qui concerne le respect de l'observance des règles religieuses, comme les heures de prière par exemple.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Metropolitan Toronto has one of the most diverse cultural and ethno-racial populations of any urban region in the world. This diversity reflects the recent dramatic shift in immigration patterns from those of the early 20th century, when the ethnic origin of most people in Ontario was either British or, to a much lesser extent, French. Citizenship and Immigration Canada reported that in 1994 almost half of the newcomers to Canada were from Hong Kong, Philippines, India, China, and Taiwan. In contrast, the combined percentage of recent immigrants from Great Britain, France and the United States was only 6.5 percent.

Furthermore, even as immigration to Canada has increased substantially over the last decade, 60 to 70 percent of newcomers to Ontario continue to settle in Metropolitan Toronto. According to the 1991 census, most of these immigrants are from European countries other than Great Britain, Asia (Hong Kong, India, China, Sri Lanka), the Caribbean and Bermuda, Central and South America, and Africa. In addition, Metropolitan Toronto also receives a large percentage of refugee claimants from all over the world who are not included in the immigration figures (Social Planning Council of Metro Toronto 1994).

Other measures of Metropolitan Toronto's diversity reflect the same changes. Statistics Canada's data reveal a mosaic of ethnic origins, headed first and foremost by those of mixed ethnicity (22%), followed by a high proportion who identify themselves as of English (12%) or Canadian (8%) background, closely followed by Italian and Chinese. Several other groups with relatively high proportions in the population include Black, Portuguese, Jewish, East Indian, Scottish, Irish, Polish, Greek and Filipino. The reported mother tongue, the language a person first learned as a child and still understands, shares a similar distribution. English, Italian, Chinese, including both Mandarin and Cantonese, Portuguese and Polish were the most commonly identified languages in Metropolitan Toronto in 1991.

As Canadian immigration patterns continue to change, the socio-demographic profile of assisted-housing communities will continue to change as well. Strategies developed in earlier years may need to be reformulated, to accommodate the different resident populations resulting from this changing mix of racial, cultural and ethnic groups. Of particular interest is how this affects the management of assisted housing and the participation of its residents.

For more than 40 years, the mission of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) mission has been to help house Canadians. The complementary mission of the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority (MTHA) is to provide safe, quality assisted housing in a manner that fosters healthy communities with a sense of belonging. In order to explore how Canada's assisted housing is adapting to the changing needs of Canada's population, CMHC has undertaken this demonstration study in Flemingdon Park, an assisted-housing community administered by MTHA. The study analyzes the current levels of involvement of residents, identifies barriers to a more diverse involvement, identifies strategies to enhance participation and explores their applicability to other large-scale assisted-housing communities in Canada.

There are six chapters in the study. This chapter presents the scope and five main objectives of the study. It then provides the background of assisted housing and discusses some of the publications that have supported the involvement of residents in their community. It follows with the history of the study area and describes the Flemingdon Park MTHA Community. The chapter concludes with the rationale for selecting this particular community.

Chapter two provides an overview of literature dealing with barriers to resident participation and strategies to overcome these barriers. Chapter three presents a profile of the Flemingdon Park MTHA Community. Chapter four deals with the data collection and research conducted for this study. In the fifth chapter, the data is presented and discussed. The last chapter identifies strategies, makes recommendations and concludes with the applicability of the findings.

Scope and Objectives

Several public agencies were involved in this study, the Ontario office of CMHC, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MMAH), formerly known as the Ontario Ministry of Housing, Cityhome, the City of Toronto's municipal non-profit housing company, and MTHA, Metropolitan Toronto region's public-housing provider. MTHA has direct management responsibilities for the Flemingdon Park MTHA Community, the subject of this case study.

The progression of the study was subject to the approval of the Flemingdon Park Study Committee, comprising representatives of CMHC, OHC, Cityhome, MTHA and the property-management company. The Committee acted as a resource and review body for the research. It was responsible for recommending approval of specific milestones and reviewing, commenting and providing overall substantive direction for the project.

The objectives of the study consist of five main components.

- *To analyze and describe the current situation vis-a-vis resident participation in the Flemingdon Park MTHA Community and to assess the representation of cultural and ethno-racial groups in formal mechanisms of participation.*
  The study describes the current methods of resident participation in the Flemingdon Park MTHA Community. This includes mechanisms for articulating resident concerns about their housing such as resident meetings. The study documents and analyzes the current levels and types of resident participation in community, identifying the extent to which cultural and ethno-racial groups tend to be under or over-represented.

- *To identify and discuss barriers to full, active participation of residents in the Flemingdon Park MTHA Community, including resident characteristics, resident attitudes, language barriers, cultural and ethno-racial factors, personal factors, management attitudes, leadership and resident knowledge.*
  The study identifies the barriers that relate to effective participation generally as well as barriers between particular groups of residents. It examines residents' understanding and interest in participation, and their past experiences in community activities. It looks at language barriers, which may impede effective communication between management and residents, including the suitability of communications styles and methods used. Cultural and ethno-racial factors are also examined, as these may inhibit residents from participating, and impede effective cooperation and participation among residents as well. Personal factors are

considered, such as the time to attend meetings and contribute to activities, the need for child care services, and gender or age barriers that may impede full participation. Management attitudes and responsiveness to resident involvement and resident leadership, burnout and turnover issues, are also discussed. Residents' knowledge and understanding of services, policies and procedures are explored as well.

- *To identify strategies that may address the barriers identified and to assess their effectiveness in enhanced resident participation.*
  An assessment of the barriers to participation is made based on the findings of the study. A key component of this objective is to examine the barriers' impacts on residents' participation and to study communications strategies to address language, literacy and cultural and ethno-racial issues, such as alternative means of communication, awareness of cultural and ethno-racial differences that may affect participation, and resident-management relations strategies that may enhance collaborative working relations.

- *To consider the characteristics of the Flemingdon Park MTHA Community, to assess the applicability of findings to other communities and to suggest options for a broad strategy to promote resident participation in large assisted-housing communities elsewhere.*
  The study assesses the applicability of the findings to other large assisted-housing communities. It identifies specific conditions in the Flemingdon Park MTHA Community that may affect the usefulness of the strategies developed to other situations. Particular emphasis is given to any preconditions to effective resident participation and the steps required to implement improved participation approaches.

- *To recommend strategies to enhance resident participation that are representative of the diversity in assisted-housing communities.*
  The findings from the first four study objectives are synthesized to develop strategies that enhance resident participation and that are representative of the diversity in assisted-housing communities. The strategies are based on residents' feedback and the researcher's assessment of the findings, and can be customized to reflect the unique characteristics of individual assisted-housing communities.

Background

There are about 665,000 housing units in Canada that receive some sort of financial assistance to help make the rent more affordable for residents. Two major groups are public housing (205,000 units, built in earlier years and owned and administered by provincial government or its agencies), and not-for-profit housing (approximately 320,000 units, owned and administered by cooperative or non-profit groups). The remaining units are in one of many programs, such as Rural and Native Housing or Rent Supplements in private-sector housing. All of this housing is generally known as 'assisted housing'.

Between 1949 and 1985, over 205,000 public-housing units were developed in Canada under federal-provincial public-housing programs. In the early years of the public-housing program, many large, family-oriented communities were developed, particularly in areas created by redevelopment in major metropolitan areas. In total, 171 public-housing communities have 200 or more units. While these account for less than four percent of all public-housing communities, they comprise over a quarter of the units developed (CMHC 1990). CMHC shares with provinces and territories the costs of construction, acquisition and ongoing operation of public-housing communities.

MTHA is one of 54 housing authorities managing public housing properties across the province of Ontario that are owned by the Ontario Housing Corporation (OHC). OHC operates as an agency of the MMAH, a department of the provincial government. MTHA is Canada's largest housing authority, providing about 30,000 rent-geared-to-income housing units to more than 100,000 residents across Metro Toronto. The units are located in more than 1,000 buildings at 110 sites, and represent about nine percent of all rental households in Metro. MTHA's total budget in 1995, including capital, was about $230 million, with revenue of approximately $100 million. The deficit is covered by funding from CMHC and MMAH.

The quality of life in assisted housing, especially where there is a large concentration of it, is an ongoing concern for housing agencies. Living in such a setting has the potential to isolate residents physically and socially, increasing the alienation from the rest of society and, on the other side, exacerbating negative attitudes by the rest of society toward assisted housing. To promote social integration and community building, one strategy was to encourage participation by residents in the management of their housing. An additional benefit is that it could minimize management problems, and hence operating costs, especially in large-scale communities.

CMHC, MMAH, OHC, MTHA and Cityhome have over the years sponsored a number of workshops, meetings and publications to discuss the problems and challenges that confront housing communities. These forums have also emphasized the need for more resident involvement. CMHC completed an evaluation of the Public Housing Program in 1989, addressing a wide range of issues that have emerged since the program was introduced in 1949. The evaluation was followed in 1990 by a CMHC consultation process on policy issues. In 1992, OHC produced a publication that identified key issues that can improve the quality of life in assisted-housing communities and provided specific directions to help make them better places to live. That same year, MMAH issued a report outlining new directions for resident involvement in the management of non-profit housing. MTHA's restructuring report, published in 1994, also suggested providing residents with the opportunity to influence the daily affairs of their

communities. In 1997, MTHA produced a resource book to assist their staff with community consultation and planning.

The 1989 Evaluation of the Public Housing Program found that there is some form of resident involvement in most assisted-housing communities, but that it is not usually formalized through resident committees. Property managers surveyed indicated that they were open to advice from residents and to the formation of resident committees. About a third of the residents surveyed expressed the desire for a greater role in running their community. The evaluation concluded that the feasibility of promoting greater resident input and involvement in the management of assisted-housing communities should be further explored.

The 1990 Consultation on the Public Housing Program identified three possible levels of resident participation, formalized resident participation through resident associations or representation on housing-authority boards, direct resident management along the lines of several examples in the United States, and resident ownership of their dwellings. The need was expressed for improved levels of communication and participation among residents, between management and residents, and between residents and the surrounding neighbourhood. Particular focus was placed on the multicultural composition of residents in assisted housing and the possible need to reformulate participation strategies to accommodate changes in the nature of the population being served.

In 1992, Planning Together: Improving the Quality of Life in Public Housing discussed resident participation in the decision-making process. The report stated that residents did not have a consistent or official role in the management of their housing and that they wanted to improve their communities. Residents' expectations of their involvement in management and with their housing authorities varied. Some residents wanted their landlords to provide basic services and consult with them only when needed. Others wanted to be involved in the larger issues, in order to ensure that their concerns and issues were given priority.

The 1992 Consultation Counts: Taking Action on a Housing Framework for Ontario discussed MMAH's promotion of greater resident involvement in the management of non-profit housing. Five key directions were given.

- one-third of non-profit boards were to be comprised of elected residents
- residents would have the opportunity to choose the type of participation they preferred
- structures were to be flexible, to respond to residents' changing needs
- residents with special requirements were to be accommodated
- program funding to support resident involvement need to be provided.

The 1994 KPMG report, Rebuilding MTHA: Volume I - Principal Findings and Recommendations, recommended that residents be involved in the decision-making processes. MTHA was encouraged to empower residents by giving them a greater say in the day-to-day operation of their buildings. A specific strategy to encourage more interaction between resident and management was the opening of community offices in MTHA communities. In addition, elected residents' councils were recommended as vehicles for resident participation in the decision-making process. Regular meetings between residents' councils and the community office manager were recommended, to encourage greater collaboration on issues such as security, maintenance and the quality of services.

Based on KPMG's recommendations, two residents' councils were established in 1995. The councils agreed to work with residents and the property managers to address barriers to full community participation, and to identify and represent residents' views on issues relating to their communities. MTHA recognized that some residents' groups had concerns about the councils. They preferred different forms of participation such as informal community groups or resident associations. Therefore, MTHA provided communities with the flexibility to choose their own form of participation. In return, MTHA made a commitment to communicate regularly, through community meetings to provide opportunities for feedback and input into local decision-making, and to help establish partnerships in the community.

The 1997 Community Consultation and Planning at MTHA resource book provided staff with guidelines on how to consult with local communities around corporate initiatives. The use of a framework on consultation and planning would assist MTHA staff in developing and conducting community outreach. Resident feedback would assist MTHA in determining what was important to residents and thus enable them to better manage and allocate their staff and material resources.

The Development of Flemingdon Park and the Flemingdon Park MTHA Community

Flemingdon Park is an area situated in the City of North York in the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto. Figure 1 shows Flemingdon Park in the context of the whole Metropolitan area. It is located on a 1.4 square kilometer site east of Don Mills Road and south of Eglinton Avenue. Lying on a plateau of land above the Don Valley, Flemingdon Park was considered a prime development location in the late 1950s. The original plan called for a mixed-use community including residences, shops, a hotel and community centres, as well as athletic facilities and recreation space.

The original development concept assumed the construction of a national complex for the CBC in Flemingdon Park. This attracted a large number of professionals to Flemingdon's townhouses and apartments. In the late 1960s, however, the CBC plan was canceled. The OHC then negotiated the takeover of one of the townhouse and apartment developments, which became the Flemingdon Park MTHA Community. The late 1960s and early 1970s saw a building boom by the private sector, and by the mid-1970s Flemingdon Park was a high-density residential community with a large number of families but few public facilities.

Over the next ten years or so, Flemingdon Park had a history of community activism with the goal of improving the level of services and facilities. By the early 1980s, a neighbourhood centre was established, providing family and personal counseling as well as child care. In 1981, the Flemingdon Community Centre opened after 12 years of community pressure, offering residents a wide range of recreational opportunities, and also providing space to local schools, which are overcrowded.

At the 1991 Census, Flemingdon Park had a population of almost 14,000 living in 5,255 households. This was a 14% increase since 1986, a much higher increase than that of the City of North York (1.1%) as a whole. Flemingdon Park has a population density more than twice that of North York.

MTHA's Flemingdon Park Community

The Flemingdon Park Community is one of MTHA's 110 communities. Since 1978, the development has been managed by a property-management company contracted by MTHA. This large community consists of 524 units, with 257 townhouse units and 267 apartment units. Of these, 273 units are two-bedroom, 234 are three-bedroom and 17 are four-bedroom units. Three units are used by management for administrative purposes, and 521 units are rented.

Its residents are primarily families, both single parent and two-parent, representing a broad range of cultural and ethno-racial groups (see Chapter 3). A wide range of public, social and recreational programs are available. Examples of these include personal counseling, legal assistance, information referrals and emergency services.

In 1995, revenue for Flemingdon Park MTHA Community was $1.85million and the total operating costs were $4.68 million resulting in an operating loss of $ 2.83 million. This loss was shared equally between MMAH and CMHC. The average net operating loss per unit was $4,639.

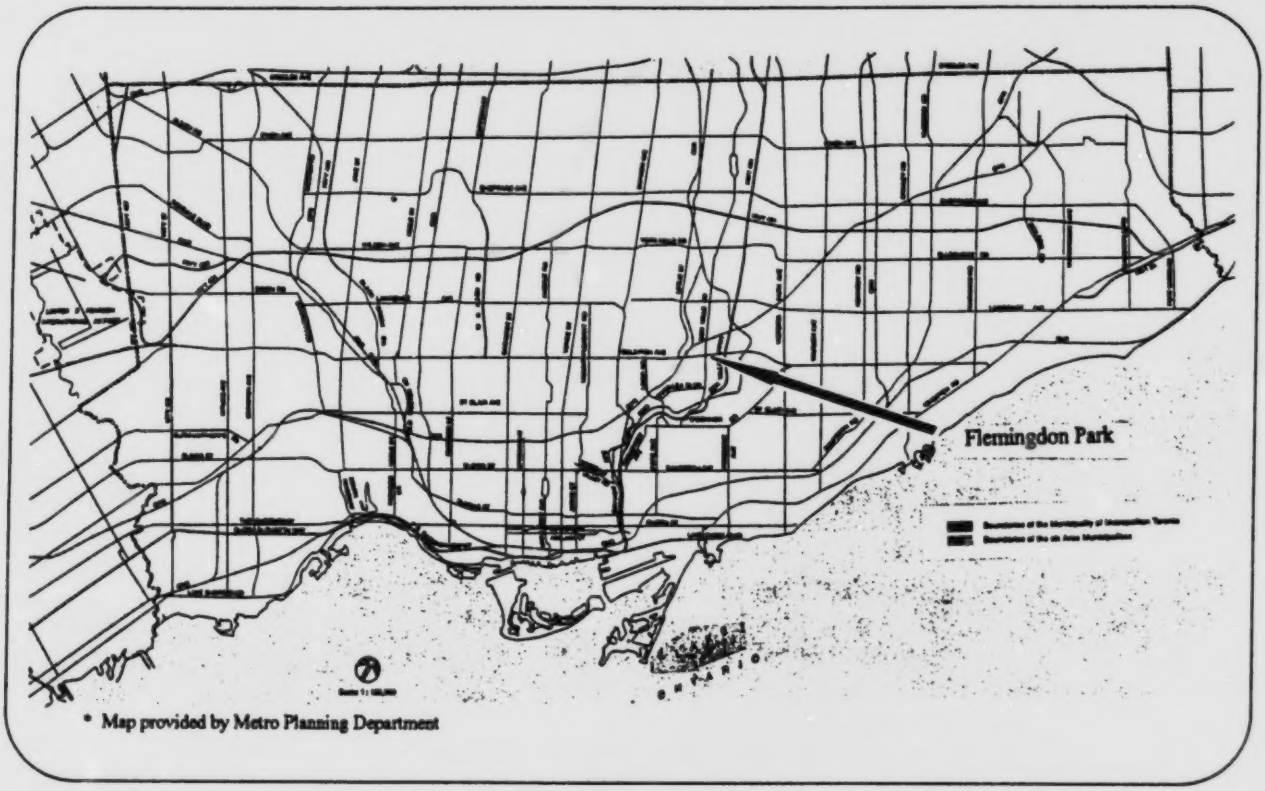
Rationale for Undertaking this Study and for Selecting Flemingdon Park

Research and literature in the areas of resident participation in assisted housing is limited. There is a small but growing body of academic literature on the MTHA in general (Smith 1995), on diversity in MTHA communities (Murdie 1994), and on the resident participation in MTHA and in Canada's assisted housing in general (Prairie Research Associates Inc. 1991, Ontario Nonprofit Housing Association 1993, Vakili-Zad 1993, and Greater Vancouver Regional District 1995). There has been one report on cultural and ethno-racial barriers to social housing in British Columbia (Circa Enterprises and Associates 1995). There has been much more literature published on resident participation in assisted-housing communities elsewhere, in the United States (Baron 1974, Meehan 1975, Sadacca and Loux 1978, Diaz 1979, CMHC 1987, Monti 1989, Carlile 1990, Marabella 1991, Reingold 1994, Peterman 1994) and in the United Kingdom (Hague 1990, Cairncross et al. 1990, 1992, 1993).

However, the literature has not yet focused on the challenges presented to resident participation by the cultural and ethno-racial diversity found in Metro's assisted-housing communities. Thus there is a research and literature gap. The findings from the Flemingdon Park demonstration study should lessen the gap and may be useful for resident groups, management, and housing agencies of other housing communities.

The Flemingdon Park MTHA Community was selected for this study because of its community activism, ethno-cultural and socio-demographic characteristics and because of a 1991 workshop CMHC held jointly with MTHA at which residents were present. At the workshop, the MTHA residents identified the need for more involvement, integration and communication between various cultural and ethno-racial groups in the community.

Figure 1: Location of Flemingdon Park within the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto



* Map provided by Metro Planning Department

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter reviews Canadian and international research on the cultural and ethno-racial variables that may affect resident participation in assisted housing. The focus is on identifying the range of potential barriers relating to the cultural and ethno-racial diversity common to many assisted-housing communities, and potential strategies for eliminating the main barriers. The purpose of this literature review is to provide a broad contextual background for the particular findings of the Flemingdon Park MTHA community. Later chapters refer back to literature discussed here, where the cited studies help put the data into context.

Potential barriers to resident participation in assisted-housing communities, based on cultural and ethno-racial diversity, are not addressed as such in the literature. Rather, research is found in a variety of contexts, including business management, organizational change and development, public health, the use of health services, education, and barriers to effective education and training among minority populations.

Many of the barriers discussed in the literature relate to most any form of human interaction in which the participants are from diverse cultural and ethno-racial backgrounds. For this review, this literature was filtered for relevance to assisted-housing communities in Metro Toronto and urban Canada (see Appendix A). US race-relations literature reflects the specific nature of US inner cities and US black-white relations, and therefore reliance on this was limited.

The chapter identifies and discusses those variables that seem to be most relevant to assisted-housing communities. Some potential barriers and strategies are discussed in greater detail than others, a reflection of the availability of literature and not of the significance of the potential barrier. Greater detail has also been provided about the findings of the literature that is focused explicitly on assisted-housing communities. There is a range of activities that are commonly defined as participation, such as sharing information, consultation, ongoing dialogue and shared decision-making (Arnstein 1969), and the literature search did not focus on any one form or type. The chapter is organized around a review of the literature based on the following themes:

- primary variables
- secondary variables
- structural and institutional factors
- strategies for addressing barriers.

Primary and Secondary Variables Affecting Participation

A large proportion of social research over the years has focused on which different factors such as personal characteristics, or variables, affect social interaction and how. Berelson and Steiner (1964) introduced this approach more than 30 years ago in their classic study, Human Behavior: An Inventory of Scientific Findings. Identifying the most powerful forces at work that shape human behaviour has been at the heart of much explanatory research and the source of many of the most engaging controversies. One might expect that there would have been a fair amount of research devoted to exploring cultural and ethno-racial factors affecting resident participation in

assisted housing, including the personal characteristics of residents as well as the impact of situational, organizational and contextual factors. In fact, the research has been quite limited to date. As a result, this section draws upon a wide variety of literature to identify two lists of personal characteristics that may, under certain circumstances, become barriers to positive and effective social interaction. These characteristics can serve as a check list for facilitators and participants alike.

Referred to as variables in the literature,these characteristics are common to everyone. They are found in countless combinations, resulting in the great diversity we find among people. Though our universal identity as human beings is our primary identity and is more fundamental than any other identity, individuals claim recognition on a wide variety of bases. As Richmond (1994:43) notes: "Gender, age, nationality, citizenship, property ownership and taxpaying status may impose conflicting claims on the body politic and confuse issues." In this confusing politics of recognition, of which we are all part, some of our personal characteristics either cannot be changed such as skin colour, age and gender, or cannot be changed easily, such as culture, religion and disability. These are defined as primary characteristics or variables. In contrast, secondary variables refer to personal characteristics that can and often do change over time, such as level of education, language fluency, economic status, behaviour and attitudes.

The term 'variable' is used here and in the literature rather than the term 'barrier'. Any variable or combination of variables relating to the personal characteristics of people engaging in a form of social interaction, such as participating in a community development process, may or may not be a barrier affecting the quality of the interaction. The variable may be an asset, or it may simply be a neutral fact.

> (Note: A variable is a concept that varies. A concept is a way of viewing and categorizing objects, people, processes, relations and events, and is a mental image of these. This mental image is not static but has characteristics that can take on different values in terms of quantity or intensity. Each situation involving a group of humans will be different depending upon the variation in each of the variables the participants bring to the process or organization. Their interaction will likely lead to even further variation in the intensity and implication of particular variables. It is thus not possible, without empirical study of particular cases and knowledge of the particular context, to predict whether certain variables will be or will become barriers or assets, or just neutral facts about the different characteristics of the participants.)

Any of the variables discussed can become a barrier in two possible ways. A participant from the dominant or non-minority group involved in a culturally and ethno-racially diverse organization or participatory process may be uncomfortable with or even discriminate against people who are different on the basis of culture, race or country of origin. Or, a new Canadian may choose not to participate or cooperate, or may even discriminate or take offense at others, on the basis of specific characteristics. In either case, a barrier is created.

Primary Variables

Primary variables are, according to Mamman (1996), the major distinguishing characteristics of a person's background. They are called 'primary' because they are characteristics that are

extremely difficult, if not impossible, to change. The literature identifies seven primary variables: culture, race, country of origin, age, gender, religion and disability.

culture

Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language. The idea of culture embraces a range of topics, processes, differences and even paradoxes. In his book Culture, Christopher Jenks defines culture in the following way:

> *The idea of culture implies a notion of accumulated, shared symbols, representative of and significant within a particular society.... Everybody has culture, and is with culture, in that they are social beings; it is an instance of their membership, culture being a collective symbol of social existence. (1993:168)*

Jenks also quotes from anthropologist Raymond Firth (Elements of Social Organization, London 1951) as follows:

> *If ... society is taken to be an organized set of individuals with a given way of life, culture is that way of life. If society is taken to be an aggregate of social relations, then culture is the content of those relations. Society emphasizes the human component, the aggregate of people and the relations between them. Culture emphases the component of accumulated resources, immaterial as well as material, which the people inherit, employ, transmute, add to and transmit.*

National culture is thus usually defined as shared feelings, thinking, norms and values that guide people's behaviour (Tayeb 1994). The research generally suggests that the greater the difference between two cultures, the more difficult it is for people to interact and to adjust. More specifically, culturally similar people display high attitudinal confidence and shared networks, which in turn reduce uncertainty and anxiety (Gudykunst 1985). Cultural similarity generates reciprocal feelings; people who are similar culturally tend to like each other (Brewer and Campbell 1976). Certain dimensions of the dominant group's culture can have varying significance on a minority group's interaction. Prominent among these dimensions of culture are: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity-femininity, individualism-collectivism, concept of time, use of language both verbal and body, perception and use of space, and orientation to nature (Hofstede 1980, 1991, Triandis et al. 1988, Adler 1991).

Moreover, comparative studies have found that culture affects work-related values and behaviours and that differences between cultures can cause difficulties in a multicultural workplace (Kirchmeyer and Cohen 1992). In summary, the larger the gap between a diverse employee's culture and that of the dominant group, the more effort will be required to improve interaction (Mamman 1996:450-452).

race

The most important thing to remember in considering issues relating to the race of a person is that although race is a "key element in interpersonal interaction, what matters is not the actual race but the meaning people attach to it" (Mamman 1996:452).

Richmond makes this point in the following way:

Even when there is biological basis for defining identity, as in the case of gender, the actual behavioural manifestations are socially constructed and culturally determined.... Race is similarly a social construct, the cultural meaning of which varies according to time and place. From a strictly biological point of view, there are no 'races,' only gene pools that determine the statistical probability that certain physical traits, such as skin pigmentation or hair form, will appear in each generation. (Richmond 1994:21)

A pattern of relationships emerges based on the meanings people working together attribute to the notion of the race of a person. These meanings can become social barriers to participation if, for example, some non-minority members of the group believe that human races exist as distinct biological types, possessing different mental and physical abilities.

What matters is not just actual difference in skin colour, but the way these are related to, invested with meaning and importance through interaction. What is significant are the patterns of relations that are established, the lines along which they are drawn, and the myths and assumptions that go along with and inform this. (Figueroa 1984:19)

Thus a key to understanding the role of race in social interaction is the perceptions of the interactants, which are influenced largely by stereotype, prejudice and ethnocentrism (Stening 1979). Mamman (1996:452) further notes that race can affect interpersonal interaction in that some racial groups can be perceived more favourably than others, people from different racial backgrounds tend to vary in their level of adjustment and experience in a new environment, and, in an organizational setting, some groups experience discrimination during selection, promotion and performance appraisal based on their race.

Using race in this way in a social or organizational setting is referred to as racism. Racism can be a significant barrier to the success of any collective endeavour. It is often defined as a doctrine of biological inferiority and inequality – an obvious potential barrier to full or equal participation in any number of different settings (Miles 1989, 1993, Henry 1994, Richmond 1994, Guillaumin 1995, Yinger 1995, James 1996).

country of origin

Intercultural experiences can vary with a person's country of origin (Michalski and George 1996). The country of origin can connote status, competence, friendship or enmity, level of civilization, and a variety of other things (Cui and Berg 1991). The meaning attached to a person's country of origin partly influences the attitudes and behaviour in intercultural interaction. Like perceptions of race, perceptions of a person's country of origin is influenced by stereotype, prejudice and ethnocentrism. The stereotypical image the dominant group holds can be influenced by prior experience with people from a particular country (Mamman 1996:453).

gender

Another variable is the social status, roles and attitudes attached to a person being male or female. In Canada, almost two-thirds of assisted-housing residents are female, a reflection of the preponderance of female household heads among single-parent families, as well as the greater longevity of women (CMHC 1990:26-27). The division of labour between the sexes varies across and within cultures. Gender-role equality is higher in individualistic cultures than in collectivistic cultures.

The gender role is essential in explaining female adjustment to work or other settings (Figueroa 1984, Chi-ching 1992, Fraser-Wyche and Browne-Graves 1992, Mamman 1996:454-455). Even within the same culture, attitudes and behaviours between men and women vary (Hall 1984, Segall et al. 1990). Research indicates women are less competitive, preferring to collaborate and resolve conflict in a consensual way (Tannen 1990). This difference can be the subject of misinterpretation, which can lead to stereotype, prejudice and discrimination (Powell 1990). Stereotyping by colleagues in a process or workplace can undermine achievement, in that women can be seen as tokens in the process or organization, and, as a result, can feel marginalized and undervalued (Fraser-Wyche and Browne-Graves 1992, Kanter 1977).

Sapp et al. (1996) provide a recent discussion of the impact of gender-role theory and expectation-states theory on the development of leadership roles in groups. Gender-role theory suggests that men consistently are reinforced in their role as leaders in groups because they are expected to assume this position:

> *Gender-role theory proposes that when men and women act upon these shared expectations they selectively reinforce male participation and leadership emergence in task-oriented groups. Thus, males emerge as task leaders because both males and females are socialized to expect males to take on leadership positions in task groups. (Sapp et al. 1996:67)*

Expectation-states theory suggests that leaders and prestige positions are assumed by high-status individuals and are culturally defined:

> *Expectation-states theory ... proposes that groups confirm culturally established prestige hierarchies by supporting greater task participation by, and higher leadership evaluations for, members with perceived higher status characteristics. As compared with gender-role theory, which relies upon shared expectations based upon normatively defined roles for males and females, expectation-states theory focused on expectations of competence associated with previous experience with a nominal group. (Sapp et al. 1996:67)*

In short, gender may directly affect resident participation based on cultural differences in the socialization of men and women to assume leadership positions and to the degree that males have higher prestige and are thus expected to participate more fully than their female counterparts. In either situation, men may be more or less encouraged to assume public roles associated with resident participation in assisted housing.

age

A person's age may influence the nature of the interaction as well. Some research suggests that the older one becomes the more difficult it is to adapt to a new setting, so that younger people are more likely to be flexible in adjusting to a new environment (Kim 1977, Gudykunst and Kim 1984). In some societies, age has status connotations, such as respect or wisdom. According to Harris and Moran (1991), for example, "if an American is considerably younger than an African, the latter will have little confidence in the American." Thus age differences may affect the nature or the quality of the interaction, or even the likelihood that some individuals will be more inclined to participate in certain activities.

religion

Religion can influence a person's adaptation to a foreign setting (Hoffman 1990, Mahmoudi 1992). Mamman (1996) points out:

> *the relevance of religion to interaction adjustment will depend on the type of religion, the religiosity of the interactants and the stereotype of religions held by the interactants. (Mamman 1996:455)*

To appreciate the influence of religion it is necessary to understand the meaning of religion across cultures. In the predominantly Christian West, religion is largely a private matter, and one's creed does not necessarily influence the process and outcome of interaction with others. In contrast, Islam is considered by its followers to be a way of life, or a dominant cultural force. The daily interaction with strangers will be governed by religious teaching and practice:

> *Islam, unlike Christianity, is considered by its followers as a culture in its own right (a way of life). For people who adhere to the teaching of Islam, their daily interaction with the stranger will be governed by the teaching and practice of Prophet Mohammed. According to this teaching, all strangers should be respected and treated well, but, more so, a stranger who is a Muslim should be regarded as a brother or sister and be treated accordingly. Thus, a diverse employee might find his/her chances of building and maintaining relationships enhanced by the mere fact that he/she shares the same religion with some coworkers. (Mamman 1996:454)*

In a study of Muslims, Buddhists and Catholics, Bochner (1976) found that religious beliefs influence how people perceive and react to each other. Those whose religion is more salient and less differentiated from others tend to look doubtfully at members of other faiths. Finally, some people may hold negative stereotypes of certain religions, thereby affecting their followers' ability to interact with others. Such a stereotype can be used as a justification for subordinating outsiders.

disability

Some people perceive the physical and mental capabilities of disabled people negatively. Attitudes of others can affect the performance of a disabled person and can limit their level of integration and adjustment. Negative stereotypes can be used as a justification for subordinating and alienating people with disabilities (Parish et al. 1979, Johnson and Johnson 1984, Abrams and Hogg 1988, Mamman 1996).

Secondary Variables

Secondary variables are other aspects of a person's background that can play a role in defining identity in the eyes of others, thereby affecting interaction in heterogeneous organizational settings (Mamman 1996:450). They are called 'secondary' because they are characteristics that can be changed – and often do change – over time. Several of these variables may affect resident participation in assisted housing, including educational attainment, linguistic ability, economic status, position in the organization or activity, prior experience with diversity in organizational activities, and the psychological factors of cognition, behaviour, and attitude and personality.

educational attainment

Educational attainment is an achieved status based on acquiring formal credentials through schooling. An increase in educational attainment implies an increased capacity to learn and to adapt to the challenges of life. In general, education enables people to adjust and to have more positive attitudes to new things. Other things being equal, high educational attainment can improve a minority person's ability to interact with the dominant group, as differences in status are less. Many experts argue that education and training can reduce intercultural conflict and improve understanding between heterogeneous groups (Cox and Blake 1991, Tung 1993). On the other hand, although educational attainment can influence social acceptance, it can also attract jealousy and resentment from some (Schwarzwald and Hoffman 1993, Mamman 1996).

linguistic ability

High levels of linguistic ability can break down cultural barriers during intercultural interaction. Language and the style in which it is used can be constructed to mean competence, friendliness or aggressiveness, or a measure of social status (Gelinas-Chebat and Chebat 1992). There is a relationship between voice characteristics and the perception of speaker's emotion, personality, attitudes, influence, competence and expertise. What is perceived to be an acceptable communication style is culturally determined (Norton 1983). Certain intonations in speech, for example, are rated highly (Rubin et al. 1991). Attitudes towards linguistic ability can be influenced by the dominant group's level of ethnocentrism (Mamman 1996). In a study of the low contribution level of minorities in task groups, Kirchmeyer (1993) found that minorities were at a disadvantage in groups dominated by others who communicated more effectively and appropriately, who were more assertive, and who expressed less concern for others.

economic status

Although the research is not yet sufficiently developed to confirm this, economic status may be one of the principal determinants of participation. The logic suggests that before people participate in any activity, they must have the rationale and motivation for doing so. People who must struggle to obtain the essentials of life on a day-to-day basis are less likely to have the time or the inclination to participate in activities that are not directly relevant to their immediate struggle. The extent of participation in any activity depends on the interplay between motivation and opportunity, including resources. Before people participate, especially if they are not the originators and designers of the process, they must want to participate and they must have sufficient ability to translate motivation into action (Marabella 1991). For example, a UK study of the socioeconomic basis for organization among assisted-housing residents concludes that "although tenants do show some degree of collective feeling, they rarely have a strong orientation towards collective, militant, protest action" (Cairncross et al. 1993).

In addition, there is a stigma and often low self-esteem associated with being poor, in receipt of social assistance, and a resident in assisted housing (Shapiro et al. 1987). This can lead to feelings of personal inadequacy, in terms of their perception of the quality of their contribution to a process, and intimidation, to the extent that stigma and low self-esteem take their toll on their perception of themselves within an economically diverse group. Outside their group of peers, some of the poor may feel inadequate, and thus become disillusioned about their ability to participate and to have a positive impact. In the extreme, they may perceive themselves as an

oppressed people whose behaviour will tend to be characterized by both psychological and social withdrawal (Moreau 1992).

position in the organization

Having some degree of control helps reduce uncertainty, thereby furthering adjustment by a minority person into an intercultural context. People at the higher level of the organizational hierarchy use active strategies, such as changing rules, to enable early adjustment, while those at the lower level rely on social support. Other things being equal, people at higher levels of the organizational hierarchy may adjust more easily and quickly than those at lower levels, because the latter will have less control over reducing uncertainty and anxiety (Gudykunst 1988, Witte 1993; Mamman 1996).

prior experience

Experience counts. Several studies have shown that people with prior experience with diversity are more likely to find it easier to adjust and to enhance their successful interaction than those without such experience (Klineberg 1981, Furnham and Bochner 1986, Black et al. 1991). In addition, research indicates that adjustment to a new environment is influenced by the duration of stay. The longer one stays, or is expected to stay, the more likely one will put an extra effort in learning to adjust to that environment (Kim 1977, Dodd 1982, Torbiorn 1982, Mamman 1996). At the extreme, however, prolonged commitment and effort can produce burnout on the part of participants, an issue addressed in some detail later in the chapter.

psychological factors: cognitive

People process information through a categorization process that is, to a certain degree, culturally determined (Gudykunst 1988, Mamman 1996). Participants in any process or activity need to be aware of the cognitive cultural differences between and within groups, between men and women, and between young and old (Triandis et al. 1993). Appreciation of these differences is necessary for accurately interpreting others' attitudes and behaviours. This is a subtle but important factor to be aware of in a participatory process involving a diversity of people that plays a role in accurately interpreting others' attitudes and behaviours (Mamman 1996:457-458).

psychological factors: behavioral

The rules governing social behaviour vary within and across groups. Any process needs to have participants who demonstrate socially appropriate behaviours. Some behavioural dimensions that can enhance interaction include the ability to develop and maintain satisfying interpersonal relationships and the ability to effectively communicate, that is, to enter into meaningful dialogue, to initiate interaction, and to deal with misunderstandings. What is considered as appropriate behaviour can vary with the backgrounds of the participants. Effective participation thus requires a range of social skills to deal with the heterogeneity of the participants (Furnham and Bochner 1986, Hammer 1987, Mamman 1996).

psychological factors: attitudes and personality factors

New situations often require unique attitude and personality traits. Several of these characteristics are likely to enhance the capacity of peoples of diverse backgrounds to interact in a more productive manner, including: flexibility, self-confidence, self-efficacy, openness,

motivation, orientation to knowledge, cultural empathy, openness to information and optimism. Indeed, one might argue that the development of appropriate attitudes can be essential to effective exchanges in heterogeneous settings. Self-confidence and self-efficacy, for example, are likely to be vital traits for managing in an intercultural setting (Brislin 1981, Mamman 1996).

Structural and Institutional Factors Affecting Participation

The primary and secondary variables described above represent personal characteristics that individuals carry with them, more or less visibly, in all manner of social interactions. These characteristics are presumed to affect resident participation in assisted-housing to varying degrees, despite the limited amount of direct evidence. There are broader structural and institutional factors, however, that may further impact the quality and the outcome of the process. These are presented in three categories: situational factors, organizational factors, and contextual factors. The literature that deals with organizational and contextual factors explicitly addresses assisted-housing issues.

situational factors

The effect of the primary and secondary variables on interaction is mediated by situational factors found in the organizational or activity setting, that is, the situation of the minority person with respect to the nature and intensity of the dominant group's attitudes towards minority employees or participants. The variables operating among the dominant group mediate the effect of the primary and secondary variables or characteristics of the minority person. They can either enhance or inhibit successful interaction.

Mamman (1996) identifies the several situational factors that may be present among dominant or majority group members that can mediate the experience of a minority person. The most important of these relating to assisted housing are stereotypes held about that person's background, ethnocentrism, prejudice and the dominant-group factor.

stereotype

Stereotyping is a social process by which people assign attributes to others solely on the basis of their group identity (Wiseman et al. 1989). A stereotype is a false or inaccurately generalized conception of a group of people that results in either an unconscious or conscious categorization of each member of that group, without regard for individual differences (Henry et al. 1995:329). People can have specific perceptions of themselves which may or may not coincide with how others perceive them. As Everett et al. (1984) point out, people's interactions will depend to some extent on whether others' perception of them (heterostereotype) coincide with how they perceive themselves (autostereotype). Thus, interaction is likely to be low when heterostereotype and autostereotype conflict.

ethnocentrism

In simplest terms, ethnocentrism involves holding positive feelings towards one's own group and negative feelings towards others (Gudykunst and Kim 1984). It is a tendency to view events or people from the perspective of one's own culture, with a corresponding tendency to misunderstand or diminish other groups and regard them as inferior (Henry et al. 1995:327). Ethnocentrism can be a major barrier to any group process involving people from diverse cultural and ethno-racial backgrounds.

prejudice

Prejudice is an antipathy based upon a faulty and inflexible generalism (Allport 1958). It is a mental state or attitude of prejudging, generally unfavourably, by attributing to every member of a group characteristics falsely attributed to the group as a whole (Henry et al. 1995:328). The net effect is to place the object of prejudice at some disadvantage not merited by his or her own conduct (Adler 1991, Mamman 1996). Some people hold stereotypes that can be extremely difficult to modify. Prejudice can have greater negative consequences than ordinary stereotype or ethnocentrism.

the dominant-group factor

Members of the dominant group in any organization or process can vary in their attitudes and experience with members of minority groups. Members of minority groups, therefore, do not necessarily experience consistent and identical attitudes from others in the dominant group with whom they interact (Mamman 1996:462). In addition, members of minority groups can vary in the way they perceive and react to these differences from members of the dominant group. This factor adds a further institutional or structural unknown to the dynamics of any participatory process involving a mixture of participants from the majority and minority groups (Kao and Gansneder 1995).

Henry et al. (1995:327) define the dominant or majority group in the following way: "The group of people in a given society that is largest in number or that successfully shapes or controls other groups through social, economic, cultural, political or religious power. In Canada, the term has generally referred to White, Anglo-Saxon Protestant males." In contrast, minority groups consist of people who are either small in number or have little access to social, political or economic power.

organizational factors

There are several organizational factors that may either facilitate or create barriers to resident participation in assisted housing. The process by definition requires some organizational capacity and some degree of commitment on the part of participants. The review of existing literature highlights several of the more prominent organizational factors that are likely to affect resident participation. These are attitudes towards participation, 'top-down' participatory initiatives, administrative support, organizational authority and organizational weaknesses.

attitudes towards participation

There is a large body of literature on citizen participation in decision-making activities. Community participation is a common goal of many public and community-based agencies, despite the difficulty of attaining such participation. Though desirable in administrative decision making, Gulati (1982) points out that there is no clear rationale for this objective unless there is "consensus on who the citizens are, and how and with what consequences they participate." Gulati notes that objectives of participation include feedback from consumers, building community and overcoming alienation and hostility, and the mobilization of untapped resources that often lie latent in each community.

Cohen (1976) identifies the following barriers to participation:

- experience and expertise: a lack of experience and expertise among the participants and a lack of immediate results especially in longer-term complex planning processes can lead to discouragement, a decline in feelings of efficacy, and can even result in an increase in the feelings of alienation and hostility
- relevance of the task: a lack of relevancy to problems and needs of the community can lead to an increase in the role of outside professionals and an increasingly patronizing attitude, which can result in anger and alienation within the community
- role of the 'sponsor': if a process is sponsored by outsiders (e.g., a government agency) the enthusiasm of the community participants can begin to cool on realizing that their input might contradict established policy and threaten to disrupt the smoothly running operations of the sponsoring organization.

Gulati (1982) questions whether citizen participation during the 1980s was geared to develop administrative reform rather than social change, and if so, then research needs to focus on what types of participation lead to more effective service delivery. Gulati's research on resident participation found that, as a mechanism for bargaining to improve the services available to the poor, the process can have some success. Such participation occurs more often in family housing than among the elderly. This research found that the power and influence of resident participation does not seem to alter the effectiveness of management or administration. A negative relationship can occur at times between participation groups and management as a result of this activity. Management performance is not demonstrated to improve as a result of resident participation. Gulati (1982:83) argues "the fact that administrative rationality and consumer participation cannot be maximized simultaneously places an important constraint on the one or the other." Therefore this might pose a significant barrier to continued development of citizen participation (Gulati 1982).

Katan (1988) reports on participation among residents of old age homes, finding the following barriers to participation among the elderly:

- Many residents have never had the experience of participation with organizations that they were involved with previously: "These residents are reluctant to change this pattern of behavior, even if they are encouraged to do so."
- Many are skeptical about their ability to create change within the policy and procedures of institutions: "This feeling stems from a sense of powerlessness, a lack of resources and a belief that institutions are not open to influence and change."
- Many prefer to focus on themselves rather than on the organizational operation. This is often encouraged by relatives.
- The organizational culture in institutions does not always support resident participation, nor are the professionals involved necessarily skilled or knowledgeable in the process to encourage this participation.

Katan and Bergman (1988) identify reasons why there can be a lack of follow-through on participation initiatives among the elderly. These include staff workload, lack of staff training in developing group experiences, questions about the official support of participation by authorities dealing with elderly, staff reluctance to get into conflict with other staff, management or the board of directors, and the belief or stereotype that residents are not really interested in the process.

'top-down' participatory initiatives

Peterman (1994) notes that, based on US experience, resident participation in assisted-housing is an inherently grass roots or 'bottom-up' effort. As such, there are four necessary conditions for successful resident participation initiatives: adequate and continuing resources for operating and subsidies, modernization, and technical assistance; a preexistent, resident-based organizing effort; an atmosphere of creative tension between residents and the housing authority; and strong ties between resident organizations and other community institutions. He notes that a problem with the current situation in the US is that the Department of Housing and Urban Development has mandated a top-down approach in legislation in 1988 and 1990, with a formula approach that must be followed by those wishing to receive funds to implement resident-participation initiatives. Peterman (1994) concludes the following:

Resident management has succeeded in some places and undoubtedly can succeed in many others. Yet it is not universally applicable. As a public policy it has become entangled with conservative ideology that promotes less government, more home ownership, and less public housing – goals that are likely to benefit few, if any, low-income, public housing residents.
Peterman fears that turning over assisted housing to residents might be viewed as a form of 'lemon socialism,' where residents are given developments that housing authorities have given up on.

Cohen (1976) identifies the inherent problems of distrust and concern of citizens involved with program planning for social-service agencies, and suggests that citizens also become involved in the strategic planning and decision-planning process. Cohen (1976) offers the following advice:

"Perhaps an alternative way of developing resident participation in community action programs would be to move the planning and decision-making process away from the trained experts associated with formal institutions to the residents within the neighbourhoods themselves."

administrative support for participation

A US study of the requirements for effective resident participation in assisted-housing communities found that a key component of success is cooperation by the housing authority and carefully administered technical assistance and training for residents (Fuerst 1988). This finding is supported by Katan (1991) in a study of resident participation in the management of senior-citizen housing. The factors hindering the residents included the external environment, such as family, community and, most importantly, the internal administrative environment of the organization. Among the problematic internal factors were:

- worker attitudes and activities (use of formal and informal power to undermine the adoption and implementation of resident participation)
- lack of resources for proper follow up
- incongruence between resident participation and smooth operations by staff
- institutional policies
- population size and homogeneity poses difficulties
- staff not trusting resident's ability to accomplish tasks and
- belief that resident participation might disrupt the efficiency of the program. (Katan 1991)

organizational authority

The classical definition of authority was developed by French and Raven (1959), and included five sources of power related to authority. None of these categories is seen to be negative, as effective managers use or acknowledge the full spectrum of power in their practice. A reliance on only one type of power, however, may prove to be problematic. The sources of power include:

- reward power, the ability to reward another person for meeting requirements or expectations
- coercive power, the ability to punish another person for not meeting expectations
- legitimate power, the acknowledgment by one person that another person is entitled to exert influence, within bounds
- expert power, the influence derived from some relevant expertise or special knowledge others do not have
- referent power, the influence derived from others' desire to imitate or identify with another person.

Fitch (1994) describes cross-cultural studies on use of directives with respect to compliance-gaining behaviour. Various cultural groups will react in a different manner to directives by a non-minority leader. This may affect the relevance of the use of traditional classifications of power (French and Raven 1959).

Literature on cross-cultural studies on compliance-gaining behaviour notes that the type of communication used is related to the cultural norms for requesting or directing others in order to achieve something. Rosaldo (1980) states that directives are used by a group in the Philippines as guiding "unformed inconstant human will." This group believes that using fewer directives or ones that are less direct would cause human life to disintegrate. As a result, they use communication that resounds with clear and repeated directives.

On the other hand, in an anthropological study of Athabaskans in Bear Lake, Rushforth (1981) described this group as one in which value is placed on individual freedom and autonomy, so that any sort of directive is counterproductive. Requests there are generally made through the use of a third party, to allow the other person to maintain respect.

organizational weaknesses of resident-management corporations

There is very little research on existing resident-management corporations in assisted-housing communities, despite the encouragement this type of management often receives, especially in the United States. Monti (1989) examined eleven resident-management corporations in the US, finding a number of conclusions.

- Good relations between a housing authority and residents does not necessarily produce effective resident-management corporations (RMC):
  It is not the contractual arrangement between a RMC and housing authority that defines how good its relations are... 'Good Relations' are more a matter of how much latitude the housing authority is willing to give the RMC and how much the RMC is willing to take.
- A few strong resident leaders do not produce effective resident-management corporations:
  Sites with strong leaders and compliant boards had been able to articulate positions on matters of greater and lesser significance for some time. They also enjoyed a fair degree of autonomy and in several cases had acquired substantial funds to rehabilitate apartments or

whole buildings. On the other hand, these sites also were viewed as places with inbred leadership that did not necessarily respond well or at all to demands for change by residents.

- Sites with good ties to outside institutions are likely to fare better:
  A site blessed with certain 'locational advantages' and a good organization is not likely to make much progress if its leaders are complacent or unable to articulate a broader vision of their site's role in the community. By the same token, people who can make such arguments convincingly can bring some resources to their sites even if those sites are poorly located and have an unsophisticated organization working on their behalf.

- Sites with good community organizations tend to have more effective resident-management corporations:
  The single most important factor in the success or failure of an RMC is the degree of support it enjoys among the residents at the site. A site that receives little or no modernization money can still maintain a good appearance if its residents work together. In the absence of a well-organized and disciplined community however, no amount of money will keep a site looking neat and clean. The site will not become or remain a good and safe place to live without a well-organized community and the enforcement of rules regarding acceptable behavior and practices at the site.

contextual factors

In addition to the situational and organizational factors, there are numerous contextual factors related to the local environment and neighbourhood that may have an effect on resident participation. While there is some literature on these factors, there is none available relating to the cultural and ethno-racial dimensions.

Three contextual factors are discussed in this section:

- the level of crime in the community and surrounding area
- the prevalence or extent of substance abuse
- the image the assisted-housing community or neighbourhood has within the broader community.

Other contextual factors may play a role as well, although there has been very little research on them. Examples are: the nature of existing relations, such as the extent of cooperation or conflict between and among the various groups within a community, divisive local politics in the neighbourhood, such as resident-management difficulties in the assisted-housing community and resident-resident conflicts, and the quality of the local physical infrastructure and community and social services.

It is also important to note that the perception of certain difficulties, such as crime and substance abuse, may be just as important as the reality of the extent of these problems, if not more important.

<u>level of crime</u>

Experience in assisted-housing communities over recent decades suggests that the level of crime within the community has a significant impact upon resident participation in any community initiatives. Oscar Newman's (1973) well-known work on 'defensible space', together with more

recent research, demonstrates that a combination of neighbourhood social ties and clear signs that an area belongs to those who live there reduces crime and vandalism (Brown 1983, Taylor 1987).

Saegert comments:

> *The reduction of crime in cooperatives was a significant factor in people's taking of control over their buildings and lives. Yet it is only a small part of the close connection between active positive attachment to buildings and neighbourhoods and the empowerment of individuals and groups who live there. (Saegert 1989:309)*

Other research has further suggested that a decrease in perceived crime leads to an increase in social attachment, which has obviously positive implications for resident participation in assisted-housing (Burby and Rohe 1989).

<u>prevalence or extent of substance abuse</u>

Drug trafficking can influence the ethos of an assisted-housing community, as it brands the area as being lawless or out of control. According to Skogun (1990): "Such visible disorder breeds fear, undermines social cohesion, and promotes crime and economic decay". Research in the 1970s focused on the layout of the community (Newman 1973). Having clear sight-lines so that residents could see public areas clearly from their homes and monitor them in privacy was essential. If people were concerned for their personal or family safety, their effectiveness in addressing the issue was limited severely. The issue has been at the core of Cityhome's (1994) establishment of a Drug Abuse and Security Committee, which worked to develop a community-based security policy that could be applied across Cityhome's portfolio.

Popkin et al. (1995) describe an assisted-housing authority's program to eliminate drugs in the community. The traditional methods of dealing with the problem, which ranged from aggressive policing such as drug raids and bust operations, to resident empowerment such as crime watches, and resident participation in management initiatives, met with only limited success. It was necessary to adopt a larger systems approach, placing the issue in context with other issues, such as unemployment, lack of recreational services and discrimination.

<u>community or neighbourhood</u>

Some neighbourhoods, often those with large assisted-housing communities, have a negative image within the metropolitan area. This is often the result of negative stereotyping by the media and others based on perceptions about the extent of crime, substance abuse and other difficulties. Having a bad image, even if residents know it is false, can affect participation, usually by demoralizing residents or, more rarely, by mobilizing them to do something about the bad press. This problem seems to have acquired a name, 'neighbourhoodism', and there is growing awareness of it, but no relevant literature currently exists.

There is a related body of literature, mainly from the US and UK, on the satisfaction people have with their own neighbourhoods and housing, as opposed to the image outsiders have. Weidemann and Anderson (1982) addressed the topic of neighbourhood image among residents in their work on resident's perceptions of satisfaction and safety in multifamily housing. The authors stressed the need to identify resident perceptions of the neighbourhood:

As knowledge about housing environments has accumulated, it has become increasingly apparent that there are often differences between those who make policies and direct housing programs and those who are the recipients of such policies and programs. (Weidemann and Anderson 1982:697)

The primary predictors of residential satisfaction, according to this study, included perceived atmosphere (such as attractiveness, policing and recreation), apartment evaluation, maintenance, having friends nearby and other social interaction, other residents being similar to the respondent, satisfaction with neighbours and management, management evaluation, and perceptions of safety.

Strategies for Addressing Barriers to Participation

Group diversity is unavoidable in places like Metro Toronto, with its broad cultural and ethno-racial population mix. This can actually enhance problem solving in some contexts, because more alternatives may become available for consideration and a wider critical base may be provided (Kirchmeyer 1993). This can happen in task groups, as long as cultural and ethno-racial variables and related structural, institutional and situational factors do not become barriers to effective interaction. These factors can be assets if properly managed. To realize the creative potential of diversity, multicultural task groups need to identify and overcome the interpersonal and institutional problems that diversity can present. In addition, the unique approaches and perspectives of minorities will remain unexplored unless the causes of their often low contribution levels can be avoided or properly addressed.

There is very little research on strategies relating to cultural and ethno-racial barriers affecting resident participation in assisted-housing communities. Some of the more general literature on cultural and ethno-racial barriers does offer advice on strategies (Yeatts et al. 1992), which is outlined here.

As a final consideration, one should recognize that resident participation does not necessarily mean the same thing for different residents. Indeed, some literature has indicated that resident involvement may occur in a variety of different ways with differing levels of intensity (Cityhome 1994, Greater Vancouver Regional District 1995). One such model of involvement differentiates five different levels of a resident-involvement continuum, from providing information (residents' handbook, newsletters), to sharing information (suggestion boxes, surveys), to consultation (ad-hoc resident/staff committees), to ongoing dialogue (residents' associations, resident advisory groups), to shared decision-making (resident-managed projects).

Thus, in considering the potential strategies to address whatever barriers to resident participation might exist, some discussion of what residents define as participation, or their preferences in that regard, should be considered. In reviewing these strategies, one should always bear in mind that specific strategies arguably may apply more appropriately to the specific levels or types of involvement that residents prefer. The strategies to be discussed here are strategies for interaction, cultural sensitivity training, enhancing communication, enhancing participation, resident-training opportunities, participatory management training, conflict-management training, mentoring, anti-racism organizational efforts and coping with burnout.

strategies for interaction

A person's participation and interaction can depend on the strategy adopted when interacting with others who have significantly different backgrounds. There is a great deal of literature on inter-group interaction and organizational socialization. Reducing uncertainty has been found to be central to successful interaction because it increases the possibility that perceptions of each other will become more accurate (Gudykunst 1985, 1988, Witte 1993, Mamman 1996). Berger (1979) and Mamman (1996) identify three types of strategies for reducing uncertainty that individuals and organizations can use in interacting with others: avoidance, reactive and proactive strategies.

The avoidance (do-nothing) strategy is based on the assumption that nothing can be done within the context and time-frame of the activity to correct certain negative attitudes. Mamman (1996:464) suggests that the avoidance strategy will be more appropriate (a) when the employee is new to the organization, (b) the dominant group has inflexible attitudes, (c) the interaction is with peers or superior, (d) interaction is infrequent and less intimate.

The reactive strategy refers to reacting to, responding to, or asking questions about any issues regarding diversity among the participants or employees. Since stereotypes are influenced by ignorance, the asking and answering of questions about potential differences potentially provides more accurate information.

The proactive strategy involves going beyond this, to initiating interaction and discussion of potential differences. This constitutes a form of direct engagement in which parties openly discuss those aspects of their cultural and ethno-racial differences that may affect successful participation. Rather than being a one-time-only process, the strategies may be revisited whenever the circumstances warrant (Mamman 1996:463-466).

cultural sensitivity training

Cultural sensitivity training requires in the first place the development of a culture or environment within which people's differences are recognized and even celebrated. The means for developing cultural sensitivity are several, including rather straightforward proposals to display in public visible signs of ethno-cultural diversity or to educate others through public recognition and the celebration of others' cuisine, holidays and even languages. Indeed, James (1993) has argued, in the context of discussing race relations in child care programs, that the participants (i.e. the parents) must be willing to share information about their backgrounds with others in a proactive fashion rather than place the entire burden of cultural recognition upon the shoulders of other stakeholders. Otherwise, as the African Canadian Community in Metropolitan Toronto has commented, the dominant group will have no trouble ignoring "their contributions to Canadian society (through) non-recognition and devaluation" (African Canadian Community Working Group 1992:1).

Corvin and Wiggins (1989) propose a training model for professionals who work with multicultural clientele. Their proposed model of anti-racism training, aimed originally at the white majority in the United States, identifies four developmental stages with specific training goals (Ponterotto 1988), acceptance, resistance, redefinition and internalization, of which the stages, goals, examples, and rationale can be summarized.

The acceptance stage is characterized by a denial of an ethno-racial problem or significant cultural differences, which thereby perpetuates dominant culture norms. The training goals would be to increase one's awareness and emotional sensitivity of the self as a member of particular culture and to expand awareness of cultural differences. An example would be activities that ask participants to remember their experiences of growing up as a member of an ethno-racial group, what they were told about other such groups, and how they were taught to interact with others. The rationale is that owning and acknowledging one's ethno-racial identity serves as a prerequisite to changing one's attitudes and behaviours toward others.

The resistance stage is characterized by anger toward demonstrations of racism, ethnocentrism, prejudice, and stereotyping and a belief that the system should be changed, though with resistance to the perceptions of one's own racism. The training goals would be to identify one's own racist attitudes and behaviours, as well as working through one's own sense of futility to develop hope and power for change. An example would be viewing and discussing films that deal with issues of racism. The rationale is that acknowledging personal racism and ethnocentrism allows one to take ownership of the problem and to begin contemplating strategies for change.

The redefinition stage is characterized by reevaluation of one's personal goals and values to develop an ethno-racial identity and therefore, ethno-racial culture without racism. The training goals would be increasing awareness, sensitivity and ownership of the problem of racism and one's ethno-racial identity to develop action strategies to change racist systems. Examples would be value-clarification exercises that focus on challenging racist beliefs and discussions of current events or personal experiences involving racism. The rationale is that the recognition of one's personal contribution to the perpetuation of racism will provide a strong impetus for action.

The internalization stage is characterized by a recognition of ethno-racial differences and differing levels of awareness and by efforts to work with others to recognize diversity and experience within a multi-cultural environment. The training goals would be supporting the development of racial identification as part of personal identification, with the aims of eliminating exploitive, oppressive attitudes, developing a multi-cultural perspective, and implementing strategies for change. An example would be discussions with others about specific examples of racism that they would like to confront, identifying particular implementation strategies. The rationale is that change occurs when participants can transfer their perceptions and beliefs regarding ethno-racial identity and multiculturalism into concrete actions.

Foeman (1991) describes several approaches to race-relations training, including the didactic model, with a focus on information sharing, or experiential training, which encourages interaction and personal exchanges among workshop participants, and the group work model, which includes a combination of information-sharing techniques (films, role play, discussions) and accommodates a variety of learning styles. The goals of race-relations training that emerge from some consideration of these different approaches include establishing an information base and social context for training participants, increasing cross-racial dialogue, and encouraging participants to place themselves in the context of the larger social system and experience interpersonal cross-racial relations simultaneously. The training situation should include a relatively small group (not more than 12 to 16 participants, with either one or two facilitators), icebreakers (e.g., self-identification exercises such as "I" statements), 'mixing-up activities' (physical activity rather than talking activity), question and answer sessions, 'same-race caucuses,' and wrap-up activities

(e.g., exchange of imaginary gifts or personal commitments to change). The various models described by Corvin and Wiggins (1989), Ponterotto (1988) and Foeman (1991) clearly may be transferred to other contexts, including sensitivity training among those interested in promoting resident participation in assisted-housing.

enhancing communication

The development of more effective communication and dissemination of information strategies, which are the cornerstones of a recent Cityhome (1994) study, is a logical corollary of cultural-sensitivity training. In some instances, these communication strategies will necessarily involve reliance upon translation and interpretation services. Turner (1990) concludes that since roughly one-third of new immigrants to Metropolitan Toronto lacked skills in both of Canada's official languages, the importance of translation services, multilingual publications and language training cannot be overstated. Until recently, these services were routinely available in literally dozens of languages through many ethno-racial, community-based agencies (Yampolsky and Medeiros 1992).

The authors of the Cityhome (1994:3) study argue that "providing information to (residents) is a prerequisite for meaningful involvement." The specific strategies recommended include the creation of a centralized mailing list, publication of a revised residents' handbook, the establishment of a communication standard that includes time allotment for returning phone calls, annual meetings between residents and staff, and the development of a policy handbook.

More broadly, Masi (1992) argues that cross-cultural communication models must consider five main factors that will impact the interaction:

- exchange of information, which includes the selective usage of translation in appropriate situations
- understanding, or the extent to which definitions of the situation are similar or different
- empathy, or the ability to take on another's perspective and to be concerned about the emotions of another
- mutual respect, which includes a recognition of other's beliefs and concerns and
- confidence, or an acceptance that participants engaged in the interaction process belong there and have something to contribute (cf. Button and Rossera 1990).

Moreover, successful cross-cultural interaction requires a clear understanding of each other's expectations (Masi and Disman 1994). Masi (1992) further points out that one does not have to know everything about every other culture or about any one group in particular to be able to communicate effectively. Instead, the ability to appreciate others' norms, values and beliefs, as well as the ability to look inward to appreciate one's own perspective, are the keys to successful communication: "cross-cultural communication is thus far less knowledge than it is a set of skills and an attitude" (Masi 1992:1163). Finally, while some people may appear to be naturally more competent at cross-cultural communication, the fact remains that these skills can be developed through an investment of time, experience and understanding.

enhancing participation

To enhance the participatory process in assisted-housing requires more than simply a handful of strong resident leaders (Monti 1989). There are several practical steps that can be taken to

enhance participation, such as the organization of community events, the provision of meeting space, and even independent funding for resident associations (Cityhome 1994). It is also important to recognize that participation in the management of assisted-housing can take a variety of forms, ranging from the provision of information (resident handbooks, newsletters), sharing information (suggestion boxes, surveys), consultation (ad-hoc resident/staff committees), ongoing dialogue (residents' associations), and shared decision-making (resident-managed projects). Each form requires different practical techniques (CMHC 1987, Ekos Research Associates 1991, Prairie Research Associates Inc. 1991, Ontario Nonprofit Housing Association 1993, Vakili-Zad 1993, Greater Vancouver Regional District 1995:33).

Tang and Kirkbride (1986) argue that encouragement to participate may be especially critical for involving participants who are from minority groups, due to cultural values that may discourage assertiveness. Cohen (1976) offers the following advice as strategies for increasing the probability of devising successful participatory processes:

- the greater the familiarity a particular group of people have with a problem, the greater the likelihood that these people will become engaged initially in addressing the problem and then continue working until some resolution is achieved
- the group decision-making process can be successful if the people involved share common histories with relation to the problem involved
- the participants should feel ownership of the decision-making process, seeing the problem as their own problem, defining it in their own terms and seeing the planning and implementation as their own intervention.

Marabella (1991) argues further that the development of a sense of responsibility among residents requires an understanding of what motivates individuals to assume such responsibility. These motivators range from the satisfaction of personal needs, to selective incentives such as public recognition in a newsletter, to developing the feeling that if they do not do it, nobody will. In light of these considerations, Marabella (1991) suggests the following strategies to help develop a sense of resident responsibility:

- acknowledge the existence of free riders, those who benefit from a collective process without having contributed to the process
- convince those who have not participated previously that their participation will yield something of value
- develop a sense of community among residents and provide opportunities for them to pursue their individual interests via the group's ability to meet their needs
- recognize that the complex nature of desirable rewards can lead to creative approaches to matching types and levels of participation and resident motivation.

resident training opportunities

In their study of twenty resident groups in UK assisted housing, Furbey et al. (1994) concluded that, after the availability of a meeting place, access to training was regarded as "the most important ingredient" and a "vital prerequisite" for effective resident participation. Even though some residents had negative experiences with resident training, considering it to be of poor quality, or patronizing, the great majority of residents responded with enthusiasm to the prospect of training, so long as residents were involved in the decision making on the type of training services (Furbey et al. 1994:204). More generally, Carlile (1990) argues that

resident-participation training involves a three-phase process: training in accounting, general business procedures, resident screening and maintenance; developing economic strategies for resident businesses and technical assistance to successful programs where residents wish to purchase their units.

Some limited research not specifically dealing with assisted housing has focused on efforts to increase minority participation in managerial positions. For example, Asamoah et at. (1992) recommend that at least four organizational characteristics will enhance the likelihood that the talent of minorities will be represented at the managerial level, flexible personnel practices, an agency style geared toward developing a sense of community, increased or lengthened career ladders, and decreasing internal resistance, such as institutional racism and cronyism.

Beyond the specifics of the organizational structure, there are several potential training methods that can help assisted-housing residents to enhance their self-sufficiency in management. Bell (1995), for example, describes the importance of competency-based approaches for upgrading the basic skills of residents, self-paced individualized computer-driven training approaches, and computer-assisted basic-skills training.

participatory-management training

The dominant model of resident councils has been the appointment of such councils by an administrative directive rather than through resident-planned meetings at the grassroots level (Devitt and Checkoway 1982). The more successful participation endeavours appear to be those where residents have had preexistent, resident-based organizing experience, where an atmosphere of creative tension exists between residents and the housing authority, and where there are adequate and continuing resources available for operations, modernization and so forth (Peterman 1994).

conflict-management training

Comparative studies have illustrated that culture has an impact upon the work-related values and behaviours of group members (Hofstede 1980, McCarrey 1988), and that differences between cultures pose a risk within the multi-cultural work groups (Tang and Kirkbride 1986, Vaid-Raizada 1985). Research by Kirchmeyer and Cohen (1992) highlights the value of training in constructive conflict in multi-cultural groups. The more extensive a group's use of constructive conflict, the more committed the members are to the group and to the decision.

The literature further recommends several possible strategies for managers to achieve an organizational culture that embraces constructive conflict:

- encourage work-group members to express their opinions
- solicit various view points actively
- be willing to change their own positions
- critique structure in the form of devil's advocate
- seek solutions that respond to several perspectives
- reward group rather than independent work
- provide training in constructive conflict
- develop mutual trust and identification among group members

- develop conditions of security, such as mutual trust, understanding and respect, to overcome issues of communication (Kirchmeyer and Cohen 1992, Tierney 1992).

mentoring

Allen-Sommerville (1992) proposes the use of mentors as a strategy to increase the level of minority participation in higher education. This idea may be relevant and helpful in assisted-housing communities with new residents and, in particular, with residents who have recently arrived in Canada as either immigrants or refugees. Educational institutions are increasingly making use of community agencies, the business sector and private and government programs to mentor minority young people with their education. Specifically, the mentoring process can help students from diverse backgrounds to overcome barriers related to communication ability, academic progress and social and environmental problems.

> *Mentoring is viewed as an effective approach for use with ethnic minority students to address ... insufficient knowledge about, or access to resources. Mentor-student relationships can develop naturally or within structured interventions through activities designed to arrange, sustain, and monitor matches. (Allen-Sommerville, 1992:29)*

The mentoring process can be a two-way activity, in that the mentors can learn more about the situation and characteristics of the people they mentor. This idea can be applied to a number of situations in assisted-housing communities.

anti-racism and anti-discrimination organizational development

A recent study of barriers to social-housing access in British Columbia concluded the following:

> *Tolerance of a climate of subtle racism and overt racist practices needs to be forcefully eradicated ... a zero-tolerance policy needs to be articulated. It should be made incumbent on the management ... to intervene in the case of racist incidents. (Circa Enterprises and Associates 1995:44)*

Henry et al. (1995), in The Colour of Democracy: Racism in Canadian Society, in the chapter, "Organizational Resistance to Anti-Racism," identify and discuss fifteen common forms of resistance within organizations to organizational change relating to anti-racist and anti-discrimination initiatives. These are:

- reluctance to create an anti-racist vision
- lack of commitment
- inadequate policies
- inadequate training
- lack of representation
- limited access to goods and service
- absence of sanctions
- lack of individual accountability
- structural rigidity
- ineffective monitoring and evaluation mechanisms
- insufficient resources
- tokenism

- minority change agents
- lack of organizational accountability
- limited public accountability (Henry et al. 1995:280-305).

The Joint Policy and Planning Committee of the Ontario Ministry of Health and the Ontario Hospital Association Partnership prepared the Ontario Hospitals Anti-Racism Project Report and the accompanying Ontario Hospitals Anti-Racism Resource Package, aimed at "achieving anti-racism organizational change in the hospital sector" (Ontario Hospitals Anti-Racism Task Force 1996b:4). The Resource Package is a practical guide that contains a set of tools to assist hospitals with the "organizational changes required to make health care provision responsive to the needs of all communities" (Ontario Hospitals Anti-Racism Task Force 1996a:1). It contains the following:

- Anti-Racism Policy Guidelines
- Anti-Racism Organizational Change Self-Assessment Tool, to identify systemic barriers, monitor, and evaluate the implementation of organizational change
- Anti-Racism Education Strategy Guidelines, to raise awareness/understanding of the issues and increase employees' skill in identifying/eliminating racism
- "No Excuse" video portraying experiences of ethno-racial health care professionals, and discussion guide.

The package includes instructions for implementation, with a particularly practical reference source entitled Anti-Racism Education Strategy Guidelines. The general strategy recommended requires:

- leadership, commitment and support from those responsible for implementing an anti-racism strategy
- staff participation, representative of diversity of population in all phases
- linkage with business objectives of organization
- needs assessment, including focus groups
- communication, especially to reduce resistance to change
- an action plan that outlines activities for the development, implementation, and evaluation of the anti-racism education strategy
- the allocation of appropriate resources and
- integration with other training initiatives.

In addition, the Resource Package contains a publication of the Ontario Anti-Racism Secretariat (1995) entitled Building Blocks to Equity. This document provides the framework for various tools developed "to assist (organizations) in implementing barrier-free service and effective use of resources." A variety of programs might be offered, including:

- information sessions
- human rights training/harassment/complaints mechanism training
- anti-racism orientation
- information on legislation (Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms & the Canadian and Ontario Human Rights Codes)
- anti-racism policy
- analysis of anti-racism organizational change

- time for participants to discuss, role-play, develop personal action plans
- follow-up and evaluation after-sessions.

Minors (1996) describes three types of organizations that are situated along a continuum of world views that range from "uni-versity" (monocultural, excluding world-view) to "poly-versity" (genuinely multi-cultural, including world-view). Organizations can be classified accordingly as:

- discriminatory (monocultural, promotes dominance, racist, excludes differences)
- nondiscriminatory (ignores dominance, non-racist, denies differences) and
- anti-discriminatory (multi-cultural, promotes diversity, anti-racist, includes differences).

The successful transition to anti-racism requires organizations to:

- identify behaviours, practices, or structures that ... can realistically be changed
- determine necessary sanctions and supports, including training and education
- plan for and implement changes appropriate to each stage
- review, monitor, and institutionalize the changes (Minors 1996:208).

Tator (1996) argues that anti-racism principles need to be included in the education and training of human-services workers in order to produce change. From her perspective, the training should involve several components (see pages 167-168). Johnson (1996) develops a framework for practitioners interested in facilitating anti-racism change within organizations delivering human services. The framework includes a focus on multiple levels, including that of practitioners, the community, the agency, the funders, the political level and the systems level.

coping with burnout

As a final consideration, the issue of burnout merits special attention. Burnout is a common phenomenon for individuals involved in working with other people, especially to the extent that these involvements are vulnerable to doubt, disillusionment and eventual loss of energy (Beemsterboer and Baum 1984, Edelwich and Brodsky 1980). Individuals involved for extended periods in resident participation in assisted housing may be susceptible to burnout as a result of the challenges.

The development of burnout has been described as passing through four stages:

- enthusiasm, over-identification with work, and over-expenditure of one's energy
- stagnation where one merely conducts the work
- frustration with the work
- apathy used as a defence against the frustration. (Lammert 1981)

Beemsterboer and Baum (1984) discuss proactive interventions or strategies to address burnout, including the following:

- staff development: reduction of demands, consultation, training, support groups, time management
- changing roles and role structure: limit work, arrange daily work, avoid patterns of change or stagnation, limit hours of work
- management development: management training, develop monitoring systems, monitor role strain, provide formal education
- agency goals and guiding principles: clarity of goals, guiding principles, develop education.

Summary

This chapter has drawn on the available literature to discuss the range of potential cultural and ethno-racial barriers to successful resident participation in assisted housing. The potential barriers identified include primary and secondary characteristics of the participants themselves, as well as situational, organizational and contextual factors that can affect diverse people's willingness or capacity to interact. Although the research literature identifies a wide range of potential barriers to participation it does not address which are the most powerful or damaging. There is also the issue of how the potential cultural and ethno-racial barriers combine, called the interaction effects, to create the most intractable barriers. Thus, even though the available research is very helpful in identifying a broad array of potential barriers, a great deal of additional research is required before we have a more applied understanding of these barriers, relevant to policy and practice.

Several of the potential barriers to participation have received considerable attention in the general research literature, including most of the primary and secondary variables, as well as the situational factors. Others have not been subjected to much empirical analysis, particularly the ethno-racial variables affecting resident participation in assisted housing. Indeed, professionals in housing policy and in housing management will have to draw upon a much broader range of research literature to help inform decisions and strategies aimed at enhancing resident participation, at least for the time being. There are emerging models and potentially applicable lessons from the fields of management science, education and health care. In contrast, the housing-management literature has produced only limited research and advice thus far.

To place all this in context, it is important to keep in mind John F C. Turner's (1996) most recent advice on "tools for building community." The literature on cultural and ethno-racial barriers inevitably refers to the role of attitudes and values, both as barriers to progress and as means to overcome barriers. Turner ends a recent article noting that the primary barrier to making progress on building improved housing communities is in our own collective and individual minds:

> *The main barrier ... is in the mind and can be overcome only through the change of attitudes, imagery, values and the renewal of language.... Underlying and overarching the specific changes sought by so many in the field of home and neighbourhood building is an inner change of imagery, of attitude, values and language (Turner 1996:346).*

If the potential cultural and ethno-racial barriers to successful resident participation are to be either avoided or overcome, it seems that Turner's advice needs to be heeded. The literature review has identified several practical means by which the main barrier and the many other cultural and ethno-racial barriers might be addressed. The efficacy of these approaches with respect to enhancing resident participation in assisted-housing, however, cannot be assessed at present in the absence of more formal evaluation research. Nevertheless, several options have been explored that can be examined in the local contexts of specific assisted-housing communities.

CHAPTER 3

PROFILE OF THE FLEMINGDON PARK DISTRICT AND THE MTHA COMMUNITY

This section of the report develops a profile of Flemingdon Park as a whole and the MTHA community within it. The chapter is divided into two main parts, a profile of the Flemingdon Park area and its MTHA community based on 1991 census data, and a data update through an examination of 1995 school-enrollment figures and information from preliminary field research. This Flemingdon Park profile is based on three social dimensions:

- family or household structure
- economic status
- ethnic/cultural background.

Data Sources

Community profiles primarily rely on census data, which provide information such as age, family type, educational achievement, income, and ethnic background. The Flemingdon Park area is defined as the two census tracts (C.T. 260.02 and C.T. 260.03), which are located in the City of North York (see Figure 2). Information for Flemingdon Park refers to the combined census information for these two tracts. All data in this section of the report are drawn from the 1991 Census of Canada, as the 1996 Census of Canada was not available at the time of writing.

In order to take a closer look at the MTHA community within Flemingdon Park, census enumeration area data has been used. An enumeration area is the smallest area for which Statistics Canada releases information. It is the area which is covered by one enumerator and consists of a few hundred households. By comparison a census tract may contain as many as several thousand households.

There is not a perfect overlap between the selected enumeration areas (EAs) and the MTHA portfolio, but the EAs do provide a reasonable approximation. The EAs cover 645 households, of which 524 fall into the MTHA portfolio. To assist in the analysis, data for the City of North York is used as a benchmark and compared with information for Flemingdon Park and the MTHA EAs.

family or household structure

This section takes a closer look at four variables in order to assess the family/household structure. The variables are age distribution, household size, census families and family type.

age distribution

Table 3.1 shows the percentage distribution of the population by age groups. It can be seen that, in comparison with the City of North York and Flemingdon Park, the MTHA EAs have a much younger population profile.

In the City of North York 64 percent of the population is under 45 years of age, while in Flemingdon Park the percentage is even higher, at 75 percent. The population profile in the MTHA EAs is younger, with 84 percent of the population being less than 45 years of age. As well, more than two out of every five persons in the MTHA EAs are under 20 years of age.

household size

Table 3.2 shows the distribution of household size. There is a distinct pattern of larger households for the MTHA EAs and much lower proportions of single and two person households.

The distribution of household size in the MTHA EAs may be influenced by the type of units in the MTHA portfolio. Almost half of the MTHA stock is in the form of townhouses that can accommodate larger families. The size of households may also be affected by the occupancy policies of MTHA and OHC.

census families

Table 3.3 shows the distribution of households using Census family definitions. Compared with the City of North York and Flemingdon Park, the MTHA EAs have a higher percentage of family households and, correspondingly, a lower share of non-family (e.g. single person) households or families that share accommodation. This again is likely a reflection of the dwelling types and the households targeted by MTHA.

family type

In taking a closer look at the structure of family households (Table 3.4), the most noticeable feature is the very low proportion of couples without children in the MTHA EAs. A majority of the families in the MTHA portfolio have children.

Lone parent families comprise 31 percent of all census families in the MTHA EAs but only 16 percent in the City of North York and 23 percent in Flemingdon Park. Another important characteristic is that the lone-parent families in the MTHA EAs tend to be larger, with higher percentages of two and more children.

economic status

Three main factors are usually taken into consideration when measuring the economic status of a community, occupation, income distribution and educational achievement.

occupation

Data on occupations from the census have been grouped into four categories: the managerial and professional sector, the sales, clerical and service sector, the construction, transportation and manufacturing sector and the primary sector such as mining, agriculture. These groupings provide a general approximation of managerial, white-collar and blue-collar jobs respectively.

Table 3.5 shows that the proportion of people working in blue-collar jobs (construction, transportation and manufacturing and primary sector) is roughly the same in the City of North York, Flemingdon Park and the MTHA EAs. The MTHA EAs have a lower percentage of people working in managerial and professional jobs and a higher percentage in the white-collar sector of sales, clerical and service jobs.

income distribution

Income is one of the most important measures of economic status. Table 3.6 shows distribution of income, average and median incomes for the City of North York and Flemingdon Park. For the MTHA EAs, data on the distribution of income was not available.

Flemingdon Park is a lower-income community. Median household income in Flemingdon Park is almost $11,000 lower than that for North York. Looking more closely at the distribution of income, Flemingdon Park has a higher percentage of households with very low incomes; almost 10 percent of households have annual incomes below $10,000.

In North York, 44 percent of households earn less than $40,000 per year, whereas in Flemingdon Park 60 percent of households earn less than $40,000 per year. Regarding average household income, the average household income of $26,670 in the MTHA EAs is about $22,000 below the average for the City of North York.

educational achievement

In the area of educational achievement, Table 3.7 shows that Flemingdon Park closely mirrors the pattern for the City of North York. The results for the MTHA EAs show a more mixed pattern.

One-third of the population aged 15 years and older in the MTHA EAs has completed some level of high school, compared with 22 percent for the City of North York and Flemingdon Park. The MTHA EAs also show a higher percentage of adults who have some level of university education, but significantly lesser percentage for those who completed a degree.

ethnic/cultural background

The census provides a wide variety of information on ethnicity or culture. This section focuses on three key factors, home language, place of birth, ethnicity.

home language

Compared with the City of North York, Flemingdon Park has a much more diverse population, as measured by home language.

Table 3.8 indicates that in Flemingdon Park, the percentage of households with Tamil as their home language is almost ten times that of North York. Other notable home language concentrations are: Punjabi and Gujarati — five times more prevalent, Tagalog more than three times, Arabic, Hindi and Urdu almost twice.

The MTHA EAs, however, are somewhat less diverse with respect to home language than Flemingdon Park. Almost two-thirds of the population in the MTHA EAs have English as their home language. This level of English in the MTHA portfolio was confirmed by the preliminary field research for the study which indicated that 66 percent of sample households surveyed had English as their home language.

place of birth

Flemingdon Park is home to many immigrants. Table 3.9 shows that, while 50 percent of the people living in North York were born in Canada, only 37 percent of the Flemingdon Park

residents were. Compared with the City of North York, Flemingdon Park has significantly higher percentages of persons born in the Caribbean, Africa and Asia.

While Flemingdon Park has a large percentage of immigrants and is quite culturally diverse, the pattern is slightly different for the MTHA EAs. The two largest groups by birthplace in the MTHA EAs are Canadian-born persons and persons born in the Caribbean. For almost all other groups, there are lower percentages in the MTHA EAs than in Flemingdon Park as a whole. The higher proportion of Canadian born residents in the MTHA EAs may reflect the larger proportion of children seen earlier, and place of birth of adults may be more in line with that seen in Flemingdon park

ethnicity

Table 3.10 shows that the profile of ethnic origins differs in a number of significant ways between the City of North York, Flemingdon Park and the MTHA EAs.

The data show that one of the largest ethnic groups, with 40 percent living in the MTHA EAs, is the Caribbean community. However, the data also show that there are significant clusters of people who are East Indian, Filipino and Vietnamese living there.

More Recent Information

Data from the 1996 Census was not available at the time of writing. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that over the past several years many new immigrants have made Flemingdon Park their home. In order to take a closer look at some of the possible changes which have occurred in the community during the past five years, this section reviews 1995 data from school-enrollment statistics and information from preliminary field research.

school-enrollment statistics

The following information compares the 1991 census findings with recent data on school enrollment. Data from 1995 on school demographics for the Flemingdon Park catchment area were provided by the North York Inter-Agency and Community Council and are shown in Table 3.11. Flemingdon Park is served by three elementary schools, one separate (junior kindergarten to grade 8) and two public (junior kindergarten to grade 5).

More than half of the students in the three elementary schools that service the Flemingdon Park area were born outside Canada. More than a quarter of the students were born in a country in Asia.

When compared to the results for Flemingdon Park at the 1991 census, the data on place of birth from the 1995 school enrollment statistics confirm that Flemingdon Park is a diverse community. School enrollment statistics also provide information on home language.

The school-enrollment statistics identified 39 different languages spoken by students at the two public schools (Table 3.12). The data show the impact of religion, with immigrants from predominantly Roman Catholic countries, for example, Poland and the Philippines, sending their children to John XXIII Separate school. There is a higher incidence of Greek, Chinese and Punjabi children attending the two public schools in the Flemingdon Park area.

information from preliminary field survey

During the latter half of 1995, 200 MTHA households were surveyed as part of a preliminary field exercise to introduce the study to the community and to identify community leaders who could assist in the process of the detailed field work to follow. This preliminary field research covered almost 38 percent of the households in the MTHA portfolio.

Persons who responded to the preliminary field survey provided information on, among other things, language spoken at home and language for correspondence. Tables 3.13 and 3.14 summarize the findings.

The survey confirmed the diversity of languages spoken by MTHA residents. While 59 percent only spoke English at home, the other 41 percent consisted of 25 different languages. In spite of the community's diversity, 87 percent indicated that their language of correspondence was English. The following tables show the distribution of languages preferred for correspondence and the distribution of home languages.

The information on the home language of the survey respondents helps to complete the picture on some of the changes which have taken place since the 1991 census.

The 1991 census showed that the principal ethnic group in the MTHA portfolio was the black Caribbean community. The more recent information on home languages from the field suggests that the community as a whole has become more diverse, owing to the tenancy of households who have moved to Canada from a number of regions, especially in Africa. The distribution of home languages shows that there are people from the Horn of Africa (Ethiopian languages and Somali), from West Africa (Twi, Nuer) and from East Africa (Swahili) now living in the Flemingdon Park MTHA community.

Summary

The profile of the population living in the Flemingdon Park area based on census and other data, shows it to be predominantly a community of renters living in high-rise apartments. The community is diverse in terms of its cultural and ethno-racial status, with immigrants from many different regions of the world making Flemingdon Park their home.

The MTHA community within the Flemingdon Park area shares many of the broader community's characteristics. The MTHA EAs have a preponderance of families with children, living in townhouses, although with a higher proportion of lone-parent families. The average household incomes in the MTHA EAs tend to be lower than those for Flemingdon Park and the City of North York. There is also a high degree of ethnic diversity, with two out of every five persons being of Caribbean background. Since 1991, the Flemingdon Park's cultural and ethno-racial mix has become even more diverse as the area continues to receive an influx of new immigrants from Africa and Asia.

These data confirm that the MTHA community at Flemingdon Park is an appropriate study area from which to examine cultural and ethno-racial barriers to resident participation.

Figure 2: Location of Flemingdon Park within the City of North York

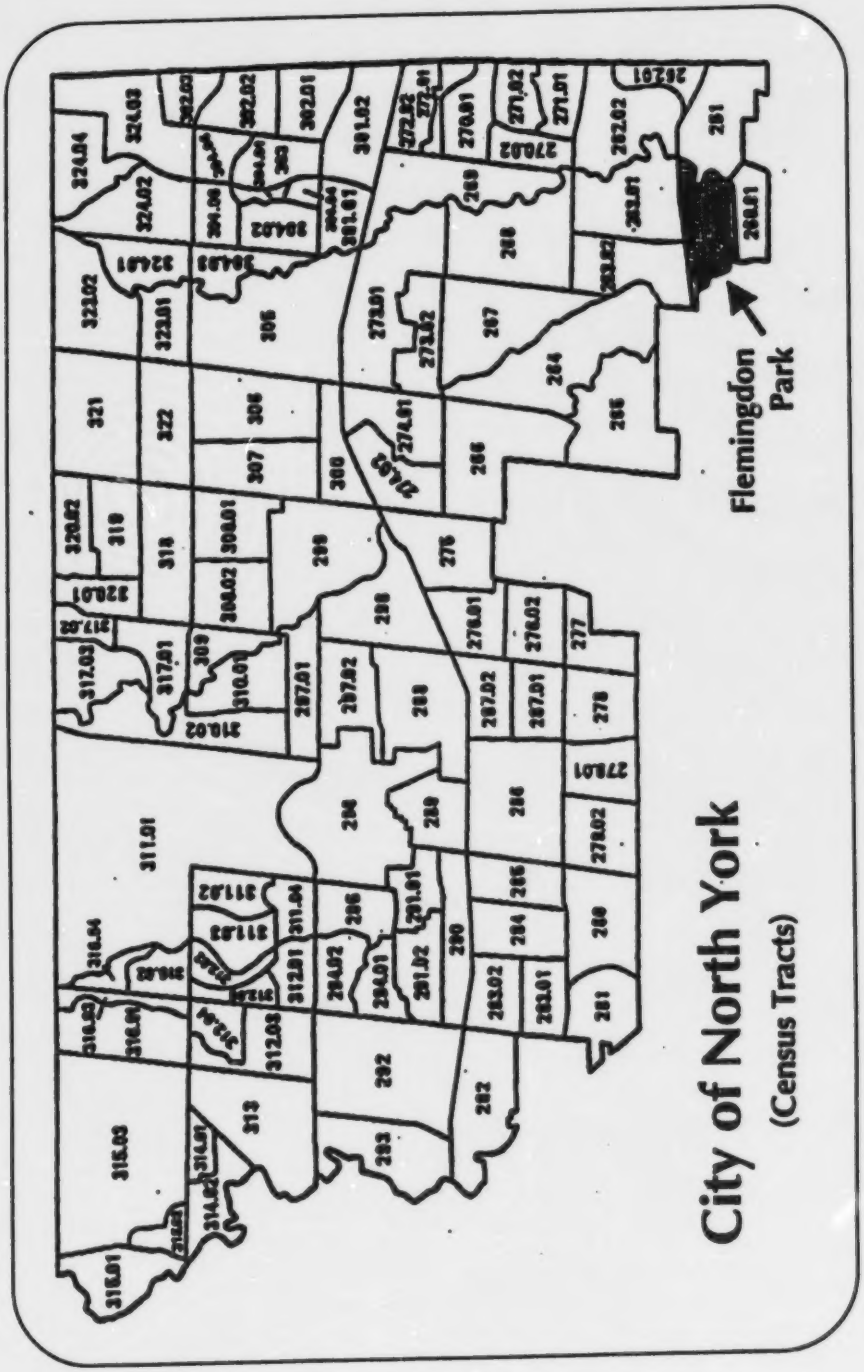


Table 3.1 — % Distribution of Population by Age Group			
Age Group (years)	**North York**	**Flemingdon Park**	**MTHA EAs**
0 - 19	23.1	26.8	41.9
20 - 44	40.9	47.9	42.1
45 - 64	22.0	16.9	13.4
65 +	13.9	8.5	3.3

Table 3.2 — % Distribution of Household Size			
Household Size	**North York**	**Flemingdon Park**	**MTHA EAs**
1 person	22.5	23.6	11.6
2 persons	30.6	30.0	22.5
3 persons	18.0	20.5	27.9
4 + persons	28.9	25.8	38.7

Table 3.3 — % Distribution of Census Families			
Census Families	**North York**	**Flemingdon Park**	**MTHA EAs**
Non-Family Households	28.6	32.6	15.5
1 Census Family	68.7	65.5	82.9
2+ Census Families	2.7	1.9	1.6

Table 3.4 — % Distribution of Family Types (Does not include Non-family Households)			
Family Type	**North York**	**Flemingdon Park**	**MTHA EAs**
Couples with children	49.4	46.2	62.3
Couples without children	34.9	30.9	6.2
Lone Parent w/ 1 child	8.9	11.7	11.1
Lone Parent w/ 2 children	4.6	7.3	12.3
Lone Parent w/ 3+ children	2.0	4.0	8.0

Table 3.5 — % Distribution of Occupations by Grouping			
Occupational Grouping	**North York**	**Flemingdon Park**	**MTHA EAs**
Professional & Managerial	33.3	29.4	17.9
Sales, Service & Clerical	43.0	47.5	54.4
Construction, Transportation & Manufacturing	23.2	22.9	27.9
Primary Industry	0.6	0.2	0.0

Table 3.6 — % Distribution of Household Income and Average and Median income			
Household Income	**North York**	**Flemingdon Park**	**MTHA EAs**
<$10,000	6.1	9.6	N/A
$10,000 - $19,999	13.0	16.9	N/A
$20,000 - $39,999	24.6	33.4	N/A
$40,000 - $59,999	21.3	21.5	N/A
$60,000+	35.0	18.7	N/A
	100.0	100.0	N/A
Average Income	$58,490	$39,048	$26,670
Median Income	$45,059	$33,611	N/A

Table 3.7 — % Distribution of the Population (15+ years), by Highest Level of Schooling			
Educational Achievement	**North York**	**Flemingdon Park**	**MTHA EAs**
Less than Grade 9	13.8	10.6	12.2
Some High School	21.7	22.2	33.0
High School Diploma	14.7	15.1	15.2
Trade Certificate	2.5	3.4	1.1
Some College	6.1	6.3	6.6
College Diploma	13.0	16.4	13.7
Some University	10.9	10.9	12.2
University Degree	17.2	15.0	5.9

Table 3.8 — % Distribution of Home Language, Single Responses			
Home Language	**North York**	**Flemingdon Park**	**MTHA EAs**
English	71.1	57.5	65.4
Polish	1.0	4.2	1.1
Italian	6.5	0.1	0.0
Greek	1.0	5.1	7.7
Arabic	0.6	0.6	1.1
Chinese	4.9	4.7	2.6
Vietnamese	0.7	0.8	1.6
Korean	0.7	1.0	0.0
Tagalog	0.7	2.4	2.6
Persian	1.0	3.2	0.0
Urdu	0.3	0.6	0.0
Gujarati	0.4	1.8	0.0
Punjabi	0.8	1.1	0.5
Hindi	0.2	0.4	0.0
Tamil	0.5	4.9	0.0
Other	9.6	10.9	17.4

Table 3.9 — % Distribution of Place of Birth			
Place of Birth	**North York**	**Flemingdon Park**	**MTHA EAs**
Canada	51.8	36.9	45.2
United States	1.0	0.4	0.0
Central and South America	3.7	4.2	2.3
Caribbean	4.3	8.5	18.8
United Kingdom	3.6	1.4	1.5
Other Europe	19.1	17.4	10.0
Africa	2.4	6.6	3.6
India	1.9	4.0	3.0
Other Asia	12.1	20.3	16.0
Oceania	0.2	0.1	0.0

Table 3.10 — % Distribution Ethnic Origin (Single Responses)			
Ethnic Origin	**North York**	**Flemingdon Park**	**MTHA EAs**
British	13.6	13.0	6.3
Chinese	6.6	11.7	0.9
East Indian	3.6	9.0	4.6
Polish	1.5	2.0	1.2
Black	4.7	14.4	40.3
Filipino	1.5	2.9	5.5
Vietnamese	0.7	1.8	6.6
Other	67.8	45.4	34.6

Table 3.11 — % Distribution Place of Birth			
Place of Birth	**Census 1991**	**School Enrollments 1995**	
	Flemingdon Park	**John XXIII Separate School**	**Grenoble & Gateway Public Schools**
Canada	36.9	54.0	51.0
U.S.A.	0.4	0.6	1.0
Central & South America	4.2	3.0	0.7
Caribbean	8.5	2.2	1.8
U.K.	1.4	0.0	0.4
Other Europe	17.4	9.6	4.3
Africa	6.6	3.4	8.7
India	4.0	0.6	2.4
Other Asia	20.3	26.6	29.6
Oceania	0.1	0.0	0.1

Table 3.12 — % Distribution of Home Language			
Home Language	Census 1991	School Enrollments 1995	
	Flemingdon Park	John XXIII Separate School	Grenoble & Gateway Public Schools
English	57.5	48.5	30.9
Greek	5.1	0.0	3.4
Chinese	4.7	1.4	5.8
Polish	4.2	7.9	0.1
Tagalog	2.4	18.5	0.4
Arabic	1.3	1.6	1.8
Punjabi	1.1	0.0	1.2
Vietnamese	0.8	0.4	0.8
Italian	0.1	0.4	0.0
Other	22.8	21.3	55.6

Table 3.13 — % Distribution of Languages for Correspondence: Field Survey Results		
Language for Correspondence	Number	Percent
English	173	86.5
French	1	1
Greek	2	0.5
Persian	2	0.5
Korean	1	0.5
Pashto	1	1
Not specified	20	10
Total	200	100

Table 3.14 — % Distribution of Home Languages: Field Survey Results		
Home Language	**Number**	**Percent**
English	117	58.5
Somali [Somalia]	10	5.0
Gujarati [India/East Africa]	8	4.0
Persian/Farsi [Iran]	6	3.0
Amharic/Tigringa/Oromo [Ethiopia]	5	2.5
Urdu [India]	5	2.5
Greek	4	2.0
Cantonese/Mandarin	4	2.0
Arabic	3	1.5
Twi [West Africa]	3	1.5
Spanish	2	1.0
Pashto [Afghanistan/Pakistan]	2	1.0
Vietnamese	2	1.0
Korean	1	0.5
Besa	1	0.5
Creole	1	0.5
Nuer	1	0.5
Hindi/Punjabi [India]	1	0.5
Swahili [East Africa]	1	0.5
Tagalog [Philippines]	1	0.5
French	1	0.5
Balochi	1	0.5
Kachi	1	0.5
Not specified	19	9.5
Total	200	100.0

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH DESIGN

This chapter concerns the research design for the survey of MTHA residents in Flemingdon Park. The following sections discuss the data collection and research that was conducted for each phase of the study. They include:

- selection of the community
- survey technique
- sample group
- field research
- the questionnaires
- data analysis
- methodological issues.

In order to identify the current level of resident participation in the Flemingdon Park Community and to identify the barriers to a more diverse resident involvement, the field research was completed in two phases. Phase I consisted of a preliminary field exercise, which introduced the study to the community. It also provided an opportunity to administer a short survey to obtain a profile of the community and to identify which residents were interested in participating in Phase II. The second phase was the detailed follow-up of residents identified in Phase I. The purpose of this survey was to assess residents' participation levels to identify barriers to participation, and to explore strategies that could enhance resident participation.

Selection of the Community

The selection of the MTHA Flemingdon Park community for the demonstration study was a natural outgrowth of the workshops CMHC held with MTHA and Flemingdon Park residents in 1991. The purpose of the workshop was to enable residents to identify issues that affected their lives and to suggest potential strategies to make the Flemingdon Park community a better place to live in.

Two themes emerged from this workshop that were in accordance with the general principals discussed by Kirchmeyer (1993), Mamman (1996) and Gudykunst (1985) in the literature (see chapter two). One of them was the lack of integration and communication between the many cultural and ethno-racial groups at Flemingdon Park. It was noted that particular attention needed to be given to the composition of the community, and that there was a need to reformulate participation models to accommodate changes in the nature of the residents being served. The other theme was the need for enhanced resident involvement, responsibility and communication. Participants expressed the need for improved levels of communication and participation between management and residents, between residents and the surrounding community, and amongst residents.

Flemingdon Park was also selected for further study because of its community profile. The community (524 units in townhouse/row and apartment buildings) is made up of both

single-parent and two-parent families. The community is diverse, with a broad range of the cultural and ethno-racial populations of Metropolitan Toronto (see chapter three). The most common languages spoken in the homes of MTHA's Flemingdon Park residents are English, Somali, Gujarati, Urdu, Persian, Arabic, Tigringa, Twi, Cantonese and Greek.

Survey Technique

phase I

A fifty percent sample was selected to ensure a sample size that would be large enough to provide information on the diversity in the community. Two-hundred and sixty units were randomly selected from a list of all residents provided by the property management company, which manages the housing for MTHA.

Throughout the Phase I interviews, the researchers looked for residents, displaying leadership skills, who would be willing to assist with the administration of the Phase II research. Three residents were selected based on their community experience and knowledge. They worked with the principal researcher in developing the questionnaire for Phase II and were instrumental in ensuring that it captured some of the issues confronting the community. Several drafts were developed and later modified under the direction of the Flemingdon Park Study Committee.

phase II

The residents surveyed in Phase II were those identified in Phase I who had indicated that they were interested in participating in the study. Three approaches were pretested: one-on-one interviews, one-on-two interviews, and a questionnaire drop off. Arrangements were made with two local agencies to provide a room where the interviews could take place. It was important to ensure that the residents could meet with the interviewers in a location outside their home. Residents were called to set up a time when they could be interviewed. If it was not convenient to have an interview, questionnaires were dropped off at their homes. During the interviews, the questions were read to those residents with a literacy problem, who were asked to check off the appropriate response. Residents with higher literacy levels read the questions on their own and responded to the questions.

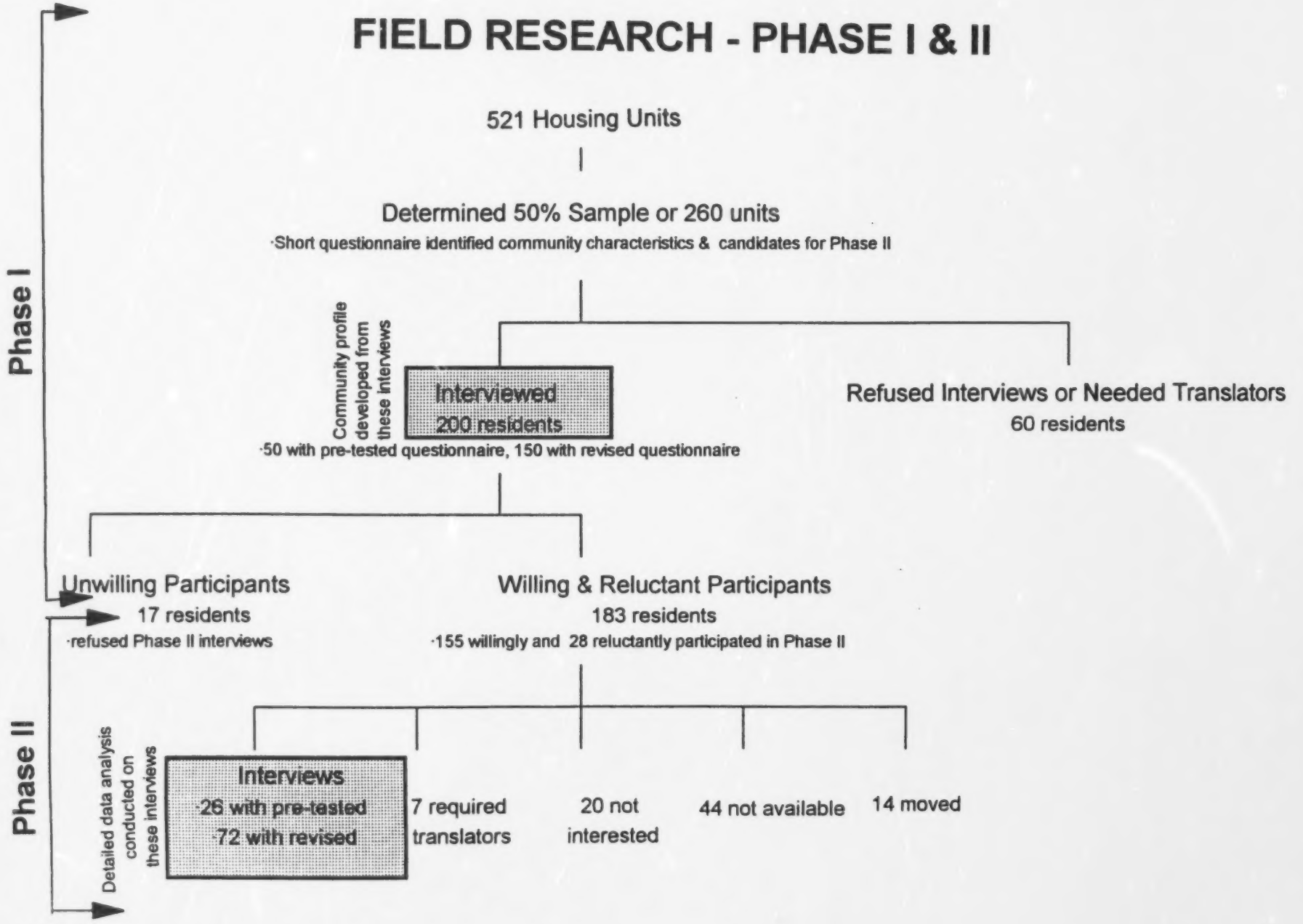
The pre-testing determined that the two most feasible approaches were one-on-one interviews and the questionnaire drop off. The one-on-two interviews were not effective because of the residents' varying levels of comprehension.

Sample Group

Although the sample comprised men and women who were either single, married, separated or divorced and who ranged in age, the majority of the respondents were single women between the ages of 25 and 58. Only one interview was held per housing unit. In cases where both the husband and wife were present, the questionnaire was administered to whomever volunteered.

Due to the geographical distribution of the MTHA Flemingdon Park community it was necessary to ensure that the sample group comprised residents from each area. The MTHA community is made up of three distinct areas (see Figure 3), St. Dennis/Rochefort, Vendome and Grenoble. Although residents indicate that they live Flemingdon Park, they often specify one of the three areas.

FIELD RESEARCH - PHASE I & II



Field Research

The study was conducted in two phases. The flow chart provides a visual description of the field research. The text that follows provides a more detailed account of the process.

phase I - community profile

Phase I of the study was conducted between August and November 1995. The purpose of preliminary field exercise was three-fold:

- to raise awareness and develop a relationship with residents so that Phase II would be undertaken smoothly
- to obtain a profile of the community so that the unique characteristics of this community could be identified
- to identify which residents were interested in participating in the study; the questionnaire used for this phase consisted of nine short questions.

Prior to the Phase I interviews a communications strategy was developed, and letters were distributed to all residents advising them of the researchers' presence in the community during the week of August 21 - 25, 1995 (see Appendix B). The letter briefly described the objectives of the research and stated that some of the residents would be contacted. The interviewers carried a copy of the letter as a means of identification.

The residents selected for the pre-test group of 50 units (10 percent of FP units) were contacted. After spending a week in Flemingdon Park administering the questionnaire, the researchers made changes to some of the questions and added others.

At the beginning of September 1995, the researchers returned to the community with the intention of interviewing residents in 260 units (50 percent of the units). Interviews were conducted either with members of the Flemingdon Park Study Committee or with the assistance of two non-MTHA residents living in the Flemingdon Park area. The interviews for the community profile continued over a two-month period, and were completed in November 1995. Interviews were held on weekdays from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and on average lasted ten minutes. A total of 200 interviews (38 percent of the units) were conducted. Persons in the remaining 60 units did not want to be interviewed or needed a translator. Although there were not many who required translation, it is important to note that this may have skewed the data, especially in reference to assessing language as a barrier to participation.

A large number of residents were interested in participating in the study. Almost 78 percent (155) of those interviewed indicated that they would like to be further involved. Some residents indicated that a study of this type was necessary and they looked forward to some positive outcomes. Fourteen percent (28 residents) responded to the questionnaire but did not want to participate in the study, and eight percent (17 residents) refused to speak to us.

The high response rate was likely due to the preparatory work done prior to administering the questionnaires. This included high visibility at resident meetings, good communication strategies prior to the field work and the development of a good relationship with residents. The latter often involved referring residents' concerns to MTHA. Overall, those who were interviewed were very

co-operative and many times offered additional insights into the complex issues in the community. Many residents divulged information because they were ensured confidentiality and because the researchers were independent of MTHA or the property management company.

phase II - interviews

Phase II of the study was undertaken between July and October 1996. The objective of the interviews was to determine current levels of resident participation, to identify barriers to a more diverse resident involvement and to explore alternative approaches that could enhance resident participation.

Using the list of names and addresses obtained in Phase I, personal letters were mailed to 183 residents prior to the interviews taking place (see Appendix C). The letters made reference to the previous contact made in Phase I, re-emphasized the objectives of the study and provided a brief summary of the Phase I questionnaire results indicating why residents did not get involved with activities and events in the MTHA community. Notices were also posted informing residents about the study (see Appendix D). The 28 residents who were initially reluctant to participate were approached to provide some insight as to why they did not get involved in the community life and offer feedback on how their participation could be enhanced. A modified version of the questionnaire was used for this group (see Appendix E).

For approximately a three-week period the questionnaire was pre-tested with 26 residents. The residents selected for the pre-testing were those identified in Phase I as more outspoken or demonstrating leadership skills. Based on their comments and feedback, changes were made to the questionnaire. A few questions were added, while a number of others which were repetitive and confusing for those with limited language skills, were dropped.

Between September and October 1996, the researchers returned to the community with the intention of interviewing the remaining residents. Only 73 additional interviews were conducted. A large number of the residents were not available (44), some were no longer interested (20), had moved (13) or needed a translator (7). There were not enough residents of specific language groups to warrant hiring translators, which as mentioned earlier may have skewed the data. The interviews were conducted with the assistance of another CMHC staff member. Interviews were held on weekdays from 9:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and on average lasted approximately one hour.

Of the residents who were contacted in Phase I , 38 percent (99) were headed for Phase II. In total the number of residents who were interviewed in Phase I and then later in Phase II were 19 percent of the Flemingdon Park MTHA community. Was this sample representative of the MTHA community? It was. The diversity of the languages, the length of residency and the personality types interviewed in Phase II were essentially similar to those interviewed in Phase I. This response rate would in fact have been lower if it were not for high visibility of the researchers, the confidentiality in which they held comments and the credibility gained by their referral of problems to MTHA staff. The sample size is adequate to indicate the broad directions in the population as a whole and to make this study useful as a starting point in other communities.

The Questionnaires

Several investigative methods were considered in order to determine the most suitable approach for each phase of the study. Issues such as research exposure, literacy levels, limited language skills and respondent's trust in the researchers were all important factors in selecting a research method.

It was decided that personal interviews for Phase I and II were the most appropriate because of the many advantages they provide over telephone interviews and mailed questionnaires. Some of these advantages include higher response rates, opportunity for respondents to clarify questions and expand on issues that concern them, and the ability of the interviewees to hear questions, which compensates for lower literacy levels (McAuley 1987, Sinnott et al. 1983).

The purpose of the questionnaire for Phase I (see Appendix F) was to obtain a profile of the community so that its characteristics could be determined. Most of the information that was being sought is not collected by MTHA and therefore is not available for analysis. The questionnaire, which consisted of nine questions, examined who lived in the community, gender, length of residency, age group, household size, languages spoken at home, language of correspondence, interest in the study and residents' race. These primary and secondary variables (see chapter two), either in isolation or in combination with other variables, may affect resident participation to varying degrees.

The questionnaire for Phase II is divided into five sections with the majority of the questions being close-ended (see Appendix G). The questions in each section were designed to provide insight into the residents' current participation levels, identify barriers to diverse resident involvement and explore strategies that could improve resident participation. It was also designed to offer some new ideas on the research presented in the literature review. These sections are described in order to supplement an understanding of the analysis that is done in chapter five.

The questions in the first section attempted to ascertain at what level residents see themselves participating in the community. As the literature review indicates, not all residents want to work closely with MTHA on all of the issues that affect their community, especially if they indicate that they just want to be kept informed. It was also necessary to compare participation levels in the past year to the desired levels indicated by residents, to gain a deeper understanding of the degree of change required.

The second section was concerned with the reasons for not participating. This section was significant because it examined areas that can be possible barriers to participation. The sub-headings in this section were personal, childcare, time availability, language, culture and ethno-racial and fear.

The group of questions in section three were concerned with the involvement of youth within the community. The questions explored residents' attitudes towards youth in the community, and residents' willingness to get involved with youth issues.

In section four, the questions focused on communication strategies that were used in the community. This section further explored residents' preferences in terms of various means of verbal and written communication, and the types of forums that they preferred for meetings.

The last section was constructed to determine if there were any structural or institutional factors (see chapter 2) that might act as barriers to resident participation. This section also attempted to solicit suggestions or ideas on how MTHA, the property management company and residents could work together to overcome some of these factors. This section of the questionnaire consisted solely of open-ended questions.

Data Analysis

SAS System, a statistical-analysis package produced by the SAS Institute, was used to input, edit and analyze the data. Two types of analysis were done. The first involved an univariate analysis that provided a descriptive analysis of the data collected. The second entailed a bivariate analysis that permitted a more in-depth and controlled analysis of the data.

methodological issues

There are several methodological issues that are pertinent to this study and that demonstrate some of the limitations of the research.

If the sample group had been larger, the cultural and ethno-racial samples could have been further divided. Partitioning would allow for further analysis of each cultural and ethno-racial group. Resources limited the feasibility of a larger sample.

Because the random sampling did not involve the selection of respondents from each group, it is possible that there may be a further margin of error. This means that the results obtained from this study may not truly represent the attitudes and feelings of all the residents within the community.

There may have been the possibility of slight differences in the responses between those who were interviewed and those who had a questionnaire dropped off. Any inability of the researcher to clarify questions might have resulted in different interpretations. To reduce the source of error, the residents were given the opportunity to ask questions and the responses were briefly reviewed to ensure that all questions were answered.

There may have been the possibility of self-selection. Those who refused to become involved may have had different attitudes and feelings than those who agreed to participate. There was also the language proficiency bias due to the decision to not use translators. Those who needed translation may have been new immigrants and their issues may have not been captured. However, in comparison to those who refused interviews, those requiring translation were small in number, and the researchers felt that the sample of 200 in Phase I included a reasonable representation of the community's diversity and their issues.

Summary

The Flemingdon Park MTHA community was a natural choice for this study on barriers to participation. There is a broad range of cultural and ethno-racial groups there, with a history of community activism. Furthermore, a series of CMHC workshops revealed a need for more integration among groups, and a desire by residents for more involvement.

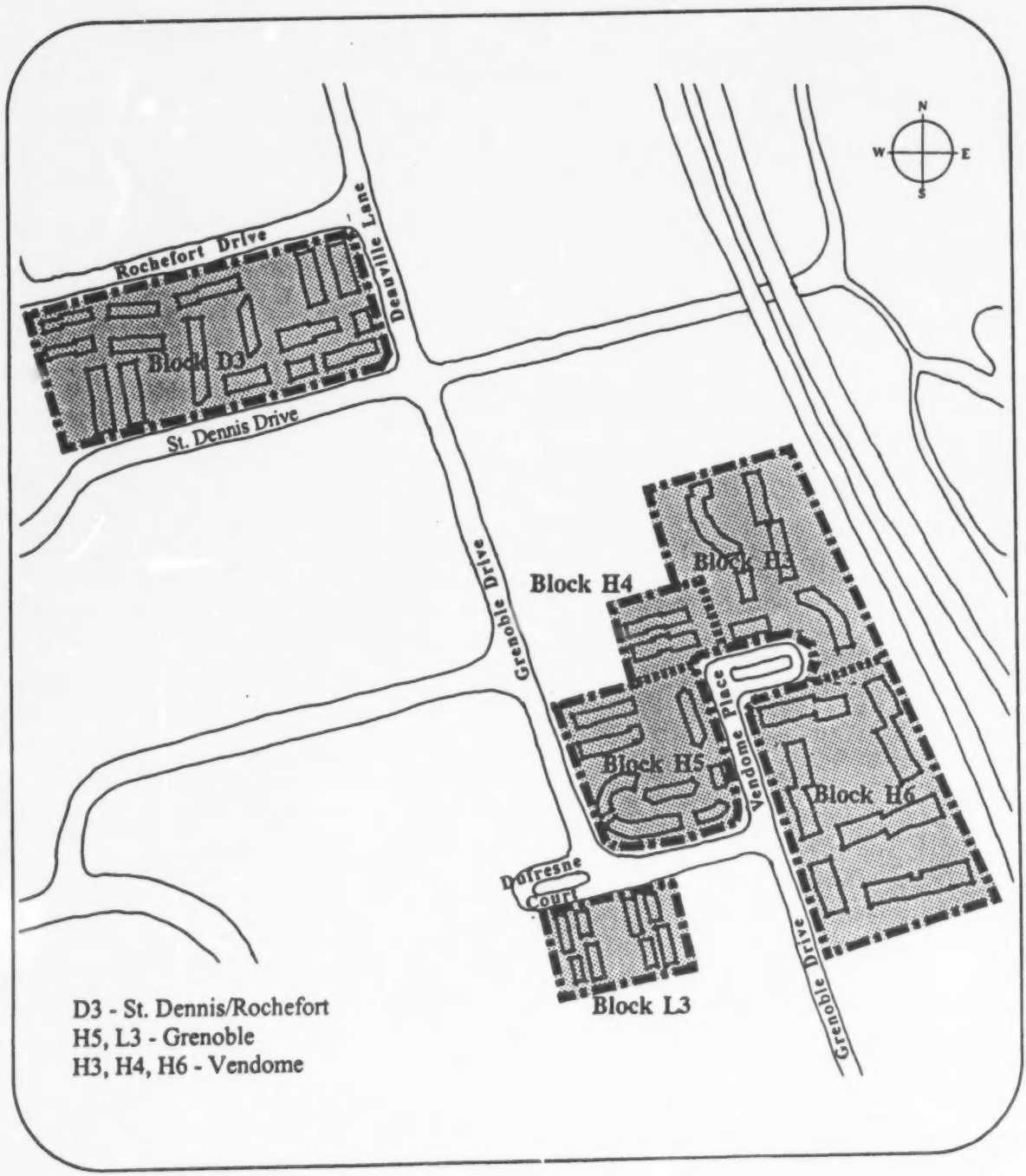
The sample was chosen from the three distinct areas of the MTHA community, one per household. In keeping with the population, most participants were single women between 25-58. The brief Phase I interviews of a random sample of half the residents in the community were

completed over a two-month period in the fall of 1995. As a result of good communications, most residents were interested in continuing on to the longer Phase II interview, and people were very cooperative.

Over a three-week period, the Phase II questionnaire was pre-tested with those identified in Phase I. With resulting adjustments, the questionnaire was used in the fall of 1996 with somewhat less than half the original group interviewed, amounting to about one fifth of the Flemingdon Park MTHA community as a whole. Of the tested options, the best formats were found to be either one-on-one interviews or drop-offs. The keys to success in gathering data were good community relations, ensuring confidentiality, and personal contact and concern.

Methodological issues revolve around the sampling problems associated with a very diverse community with varying levels of understanding between participant and researchers. A statistical analysis package was used to describe, analyze and explore relationships among variables. Phase I established a community profile, including information that was not collected by the MTHA about the community. The Phase II questionnaire dealt with levels of participation, barriers, youth, strategies and structural factors and their improvement.

Figure 3: The MTHA community with its three distinct areas



Chapter 5

ANALYSIS

The previous chapter discussed the collection of data and the measurement of the variables used for this study. In this chapter, detailed data analysis is conducted on the 99 interviews that were completed in Phase II. This sample consisted of 89 "willing" participants and 10 "reluctant" participants. The latter group had initially not wanted to participate but later changed their minds. The data for both groups are analyzed separately. Wherever there is a significant difference between the responses, a distinction between the two groups is made and the results are discussed. Qualitative responses such as volunteered opinions are summarized and illustrative quotes are included in the text where appropriate.

Owing to the highly diverse ethnic and cultural nature of the survey respondents, it was not possible to treat them all separately. There would have been too many categories, each with too few numbers to permit analysis. Ethnic and cultural groups were thus aggregated into three categories, the English-speaking Caribbean, the English-speaking Caucasian and the non-English-speaking 'other' residents, which included all those who did not fall into the first two groups. The term 'other' was used because no particular grouppredominates. The three categories are identified as the 'Caribbean', 'Caucasian' and 'other'.

The first section of the chapter provides a descriptive analysis. This analysis provides distributions of characteristics such as age, length of residency, sex and ethnicity. The second section analyses the relationship between the answers to two or more of the questions asked in the survey. The two types of analysis are used to explain the association and relationship between the variables and to help determine current levels of involvement and barriers to participation.

Descriptive Analysis

The descriptive analysis contains two sections, respondent information and home language.

respondent information

The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are summarized in Table 5.1. The profile of the 99 participants making up the sample is not very different from the profile of the sample that initially took part in the preliminary field survey.

Of the willing participants, 88 percent were between the age of 25-58. Although this category spans a wide range of years, the researchers' observation was that the majority of those interviewed consisted of the younger part of the age group. With respect to length of residency, almost three-quarters of the residents had lived in the community for ten years or less. Almost half of those (42%) had lived in the MTHA Flemingdon Park community for five years or less. The data suggests that the average length of residency is 7.85 years, which is statistically close to the 6.72 average given by OHC (see Appendix H). The largest ethnic category was Caribbean, followed by Caucasian and 'other'. The majority (73%) were women, which is consistent with CMHC's 1990 study indicating that almost two-thirds of residents in assisted-housing are female. This finding does not support Sapp et al.'s (1996) gender-role theory. In contrast, many women

in the MTHA community are actively involved, because of the composition of their household as lone-parent families.

The socio-demographic figures for the 10 reluctant participants shown in the above table were also very similar to the larger sample, with the exception of the ethnicity category (Table 5.2). Sixty percent were Caucasian, followed by 20 percent Caribbean and 20 percent 'other'. All respondents were between 25-58, 60 percent had lived in the community for less than ten years, and 70 percent were female.

home language

The diversity of languages spoken by the 89 participants is highly representative of the larger sample and representative of the Flemingdon Park Community at large (see chapter three).

Only six of the languages spoken by the smaller ethnic groups were not captured in this sample. English was the home language for 56 percent of the residents (Table 5.3). Six percent spoke the languages of Ethiopia: Amharic, Tigringa, and Oromo; another six percent spoke Urdu, a language originating in India. An additional six percent of residents who have immigrated from various French-speaking regions in Africa spoke French.

Although there is a large diversity of languages spoken by MTHA residents, the language of correspondence selected by almost all residents was English (98%) (Table 5.4). This percentage may be skewed since there were some residents who would have participated in the study had there been a budget for translation.

Several observations can be made from the respondent information. The socio-demographic characteristics of the residents who participated in the study are representative of the sample obtained during the preliminary field research. The residents who have lived in the community for less than five years have a higher participation rate in the study (the level at which the residents are interested in participating is examined later in this chapter). Lastly, English was not the home language for almost half of the residents. Although the majority indicated that their language of correspondence was English, their ability to communicate verbally in English may be limited and this point to a barrier for tenant participation in the community. The ability to communicate in English would certainly have been an issue for those who required translation.

Analysis of Responses

The following analysis discusses the questionnaire results as they relate to the objectives of the study. It follows the same order used in the questionnaire and consists of five sections, which are divided into sub-categories. These sections are:

- current resident participation and cultural and ethno-racial representation
- reasons for the lack of participation
- youth
- communication methods and styles
- MTHA and the property-management company.

current resident participation and cultural and ethno-racial representation

Prior to the initiation of the study a resident association had been meeting monthly. After this association dissolved, several residents and a community agency with a religious focus, began to organize meetings on behalf of the MTHA community in general. There had been a long period of no community activism and several contentious issues needed to be resolved. The purpose of the meetings was to keep the MTHA community better informed and to develop a better relationship between the residents, MTHA and the property-management staff.

The residents and community agency remained actively involved until a short time after this research was completed. At this point several residents felt burnt out and a new group of residents emerged, placing less emphasis on the community agency. This observation supports the arguments of Beemsterboer and Baum (1984) and Edelwich and Brodsky (1980) that there is a need for pro-active interventions or strategies to address burn out. Otherwise, it is likely that residents actively involved in their community will become doubtful, disillusioned and will lose energy.

During the time-frame of the study, community meetings were held on a monthly basis. They took place on the third Thursday of every month and lasted one to two hours. On average 20 to 25 residents participated. The group was not very diverse, with the majority of its residents being either Caucasian or Caribbean. Ten to twelve residents attended meetings regularly. The number of residents who participated depended largely on the issues confronting the community. For example, there was a large turnout at community meetings when OHC proposed to sell assisted housing units, and when a murder occurred in a court yard next to residents' homes. Contentious issues such as these often resulted in large and a more diverse group of residents participating in community meetings.

residents' definition of participation

The first section of the questionnaire was designed to identify the residents' views of desired participation and to assess the current levels of participation. As mentioned in the literature review, not all residents define participation the same way. This is an important consideration when trying to involve residents in issues that pertain to their community.

Table 5.5 shows that 40 percent indicated that they wanted to work closely with MTHA on issues that interested them and on issues that affected the quality of life in the community. Forty-seven percent preferred to be less involved; they either wanted to be kept informed and consulted only when necessary or just to have a say in the services provided. Only eight percent did not want to participate in community life.

Even among the 10 reluctant participants in the study, 30 percent wanted to work closely with MTHA, 30 percent preferred to be less involved and only 20 percent did not want to participate.

participation rates

Table 5.6 shows participation rates during the last year. Of the willing residents, 60 percent stated that they attended most or some of the meetings, while 38 percent attended none. With regards to the reluctant respondents, 40 percent attended most or some of the meetings, while 60 percent attended none.

The researcher's observation was that the majority of willing participants who wanted to work closely with MTHA were those who attended most of the meetings.

Table 5.7 shows participation levels by length of residency. It shows that of the willing participants, those who attended most or some of the meetings were more likely to have lived in the community for more than six years. For the reluctant participants, length of residency did not seem to increase participation levels for those who attended most or some of the meetings.

Overall, greater participation is seen with longer residency. This finding is significant because 42 percent of residents have lived in the community for five years or less. Possible reasons are explored later (Table 5.10) and include lack of comfort that they can be actively involved in the community, and unfamiliarity with where information can be obtained and the role and objectives of certain community groups.

When participation rates are examined by ethnic categories (Table 5.8), it can be seen that the Caribbean residents made up about half of the participants at community meetings. Other categories than those in the 'other' and Caucasian categories.

In Table 5.9 the individual groups' attendance is examined as a percentage of the numbers in that ethnic group. The data show that, on a proportional basis, the ethnic category that participates most is Caucasian (68%) in comparison to Caribbean (58%) or 'other' (55%) categories.

As discussed in the literature review, it is possible that those who have had more prior experience dealing with diversity are more likely to adjust and interact than those who have had less, which is the case for many who make up the 'other' category. Other possible barriers include language and culture/ethnicity/race, and are discussed further on in this chapter.

reasons for the lack of participation

The second section of the questionnaire attempted to identify the reasons residents do not get involved. Discussions with some residents prior to the Phase I interviews showed they were not involved with the community for a variety of reasons. Some of these included personal reasons such as age, gender or lack of interest in the community, the lack of childcare or time, and fear of certain people in the community. For residents who had difficulty communicating in English, language, cultural, or ethno-racial barriers tended to affect their participation. However, the discussion of the data analysis shows that although there are several barriers that affect participation rates, they were not necessarily the ones that were thought to be probable before the study began.

personal factors

The analysis of data on personal factors affecting participation enables the researchers to make some interesting conclusions. Age, for example, was not a barrier. This was probably because most of the participants were relatively young. This finding supports Kim (1977) and Gudykunst and Kim's (1984) work indicating that younger people tend to be more flexible and to adapt more easily to new environments. Gender was not a barrier for the Caucasian and Caribbean residents, but came up as a possible barrier for the 'other' category. Distance that the residents have to walk to meetings also was not flagged as a barrier. This is likely because meetings are usually held in close proximity to the MTHA community. As a result, age, gender and distance are omitted from further analysis, as they were not seen as significant barriers to participation.

The main barriers for the willing and reluctant respondents had to do with the lack of overall knowledge about the community. Many residents said that they did not know enough about their rights, community issues and upcoming meetings. One resident stated, "there is no organized group that conducts a planned and organized meeting. Information is not given out prior to the meetings". Although this has not been the case since the community agency started holding meetings, the lingering impression by residents that meetings were disorganized and headed by leaders who lacked the ability to resolve issues was a barrier to their participation. Another resident expressed it this way: "things get started but are never carried through". As Cohen (1976) indicated, lack of experience and immediate results can lead to discouragement and result in a negative attitude towards participation. The above issues were mainly raised by the 'burnout' residents who had lived in the community the longest. One residents' frustration was portrayed as follows:

> *I had been an active participant in the residents association for many years. I assisted in the preparation and distribution of "the Flemingdon Voice". I helped in the Flemingdon Park Canada Day celebration and barbecue. I marched with other residents around the community to rid our community of drug activities. I began to lose interest when a valuable resident and active community worker passed away suddenly a few years ago, and her contributions were never acknowledged by management, or the residents association. I'm still interested in the welfare of my community, but my commitment will never be the same.*

To a lesser extent another barrier identified was the feeling of isolation and not wanting to get to know others in the community.

When the reasons for not participating were examined by length of residency, there was some variation (Table 5.10). For example, residents who had lived in the MTHA community for 5 years or less felt that they did not know what was going on (70%), did not know their rights (52%) and did not know where to obtain information (37%). Residents who had lived there for 6-10 years also felt that they did not know enough about what was going on (42%) and did not know their rights (33%). On the other hand the longer term residents were more critical of nothing ever happening as a result of meetings (59%) and meetings not being well organized (45%).

When these barriers are analyzed by the three cultural and ethno-racial categories it is apparent that not all the groups have the same concerns (Table 5.11). Only the Caribbean group felt that they "don't know enough about what's going on to make a valuable contribution". This is of interest since the Caribbean groups' participation levels, as seen in earlier discussion, were higher than the other two categories. The percentage of Caucasian residents who stated that "meetings are not well organized" and that "nothing ever happens as a result of these meetings" was much higher than the other two groups. There was no significant percentage differences for the 'other' category suggesting that there was no dominant reason for not participating.

childcare

Several questions on childcare were included, to determine if this was a potential barrier to participation. It should be noted that during every meeting at the MTHA community,

arrangements are made for free childcare. Children are supervised and play in a room adjacent to the meeting.

The analysis of the data pertaining to the willing and to the reluctant participants indicate that childcare was a barrier for approximately half of those who have children, this underlining the community's lack of awareness that childcare is provided. Many residents were surprised to hear about this free service. In fact, one resident said, "I did not know that there was day care available at these meetings." On the other hand, it appears that some of the residents knew about the service but used this as an excuse for not participating. This is especially true for long-term Caribbean and Caucasian residents who have at some point been exposed to the existence of this service.

time availability

The lack of time to attend meetings was also expected to be a potential barrier to participation. Factors such as shift work, length of meetings, involvement in other activities and times for worship were explored. The analysis shows that time availability was not a factor for most residents, but only for a small group of the residents who worked shifts. Most residents felt that the length of the meetings was appropriate and that involvement in other activities was not an issue. However, meetings held during time of worship was a problem for the Caribbean and 'other' residents, who were Muslim and whose prayer time is at sunset, which often coincides with meeting times.

language

It was necessary to identify any limitations residents had in terms of their ability to communicate in English. As discussed earlier these limitations may have been more pronounced if those who required translation has been included in this research. Residents were asked about their comfort level in terms of their ability to understand, speak and read English.

The data shows that there were 23 responses indicating that language affected participation. Only a small number of these had to do with reading English. This supports the data presented earlier indicating that the language of correspondence selected by almost all residents was English. A few more residents indicated that they had difficulty understanding English. A greater indication was seen of being uncomfortable in speaking English. According to Kirchmeyer (1993), spoken language difficulties put people at a disadvantage with regards to what they contribute because they are dominated by others who can communicate more effectively in English. This can further emphasize the dominant-group factor as discussed in the literature by Mamman (1996), Kao and Gansneder (1995) and Henry et al. (1995).

culture/ethnicity/race

It was hypothesized that residents' culture, ethnicity or race could act as a barrier to their participation in the community. The various questions examined issues such as the scheduling of meetings, gender roles, intimidation, cultural dress and beliefs, and political and religious differences.

The data showed that meetings are common to every culture. Residents stated that while meetings do not necessarily follow the same format as used in Canada, nevertheless people so still get together to discuss issues, and so the fact of meetings or the format of them is not a barrier.

Gender was flagged as a possible barrier for those in the 'other' category. Although women in many cultures are not prohibited from participating, many women, unless they are single mothers, choose to not participate, because they see it as their husband's responsibility. The acceptance of cultural dress and beliefs, and political and religious differences was not raised as an issue for the majority of the residents.

In the data, two variables that appeared to be of most concern to the Caribbean and 'other' categories was the feeling of intimidation and the feeling of participation not being valued because of being from a different cultural, racial or ethnic background. One resident commented: "Other reasons such as racism have not been mentioned. That can be one of the impediments to attending". As described in the literature review, differences between two cultures could lead to difficulty in people's ability to interact and adjust. A groups' diversity alone can result in uncertainty and anxiety. This can be further complicated when race is added to the picture. As the literature states, race can be an obvious potential barrier to full or equal participation in any number of settings.

In further discussion with residents, some from the 'other' category indicated that they do not participate in community or social events because of the type of food preparation that takes place. Some cultures do not eat pork or beef, so a barbecue where these foods are prepared would discourage those residents from participating. Several residents suggested having a separate barbecue so that those who have strong religious beliefs can still prepare their food, while participating in the event.

Another issue that came up was the message perceived by the community when meetings are organized by groups other than the residents. For example, meetings in the MTHA community were organized by several residents and staff from the community agency. Because the agency was seen as having a religious affiliation, some residents did not feel comfortable participating in activities organized by them. This was noteworthy since the community agency did not place any emphasis on its religion and attempted to be inclusive of all groups.

fear

The literature states that crime in assisted-housing communities has had a significant impact on residents' willingness to participate in any community initiative. A variety of violent incidents have occurred in the Flemingdon Park area over the years and this has given it a reputation as a high crime area (see Appendix I). Many residents are afraid to get involved. One resident said:

> *After dark I see men gathering in groups in my neighbourhood, which scares me and my children. There are robberies and purse snatchings in the area, which is why we are afraid to come out of our house after dark. Management and police don't do much to improve the reputation and make the neighbourhood safe for the residents. There is no policing in the area.*

In the fall of 1997, residents' fear was addressed with the opening of a community police station (see Appendix J). It is expected that police presence will help reduce crime and will increase the feeling of safety and protection by residents throughout the community. Perhaps with time, this added protection may reduce the negative image and stereotypes held by the media and others about the extent of crime and substance abuse in the area. The following table describes the extent of fear.

Researchers asked if fear affected participation. Residents felt it did. This comment was typical of some of the comments heard:

It is well know that in Flemingdon Park there is a high incidence of drug use. Because of this many people carry weapons like knives and guns. A number of murders have occurred in this area over the years. Drugs are publicly consumed in full view of children. Other behaviours are also rampant such as urinating and defecating in the open, vandalism of private property, breaking and entering and theft.

Although meetings are usually held at a local school in close proximity to the MTHA community, 38 percent of the willing and 70 percent of the reluctant participants stated that they were afraid to walk to meetings at night. In order to ensure their safety, some residents said that they walked together to and from meetings.

Residents reported that there is often a large number of young people hanging around the community. This is because many local youth lack a high-school education, are unemployed and have nothing to do. Others from outside come to this area to traffic drugs. This is likely why 37 percent of the willing and 60 percent of the reluctant participants said that they were afraid of the youth in the community. As Skogun's (1990) said "such visible disorder breeds fear, undermines social cohesion and promotes crime and economic decay". There is a significant difference between the responses of the willing and reluctant participants with respect to the fear of walking around the community and fear of youth. The percentage is almost twice as much among the reluctant participants as among the willing participants.

Seventeen percent of the residents indicated that they were afraid of some of the neighbours at the meetings. Twenty-five percent were afraid to speak out for fear that their neighbours would hold what they said against them, resulting in having something happen to them, their family or their home. One resident stated, "I'm scared to attend meetings because of the drug dealers in attendance at meetings. There's not enough protection for people who speak out...." The object of this fear is those residents who attend meetings to find out what the MTHA community is doing to deal with the youth and the drug problem, and who are suspected of acting as informants for the drug dealers who do not live in the community.

Some residents (21%) were also afraid to speak out for fear that management would hold what they said against them. When this questions was probed further it was clear that some residents are not aware of their rights and to some extent feared authority. Fear of authority for some residents in the 'other' category appears to stem from their homelands' political regime, where the law is so militaristic and dictatorial that people do not speak out. This is not the case in the MTHA Community, but some residents, who were exposed to this harsh political environment are still not comfortable speaking out.

The following quotes demonstrate various kinds of fear of management that residents exhibited when they were being interviewed:

Nobody wants to be thrown out, they don't have the money to move elsewhere. Many don't want to say anything because they are afraid. Scared of management using their power to turn against people.

Another resident said:

Although management says you won't be hassled by speaking out, sometimes you are treated differently but they say it's for other reasons, not because of the participation. Some incidents seem too coincidental.

Yet another resident felt that:

Management will make things difficult by constant harassment if they feel you don't comply with their way of doing things.

Interestingly, when the level of fear was broken down into the three cultural and ethno-racial categories, fear of management and fear of participating in things that have to do with government were more prevalent amongst the 'other' category.

other reasons

To ensure this study was comprehensive, the researchers decided to explore other possible barriers that could affect residents willingness to participate. This was done with two close-ended and one open-ended question. The first two close-ended questions probed the possibility of conflicts either between the community agency and residents, or resident leaders and residents. The findings were not conclusive. Although there were a few residents who agreed with the questions, there were many who disagreed, while others felt that the questions did not apply to them.

The open-ended question provided residents with the opportunity to identify other reasons for not participating. The responses confirmed earlier findings. Comments such as flyers advising residents of meetings not being delivered in advance, the lack of leadership by someone who could chair meetings properly, the need to have facilitators assist residents at meetings and the need for a translated insert advising residents of meetings, were all responses that provided the researchers with confirmation of the importance of these issues.

Residents were asked to rank the three main reasons they did not participate or get involved in community meetings. The main reasons given were personal reasons, lack of time and little gets done, followed by the need for childcare and discomfort with some residents.

The above discussion demonstrates that there is not one specific barrier that limits residents from participating, but that rather a combination of these. Some of the issues can be easily dealt with, while others are more complicated and will only be solved over time as result of exposure and the development of trust.

youth

This section of the questionnaire attempted to capture how issues involving youth affect residents. When the questionnaire was being designed, the three residents who assisted with the development of the questionnaire very much wanted this area to be dealt with in more depth, as they feel there is a serious issue concerning youth in the Flemingdon Park area. Concerns centre around the issues of substance abuse and crime. These issues were linked in earliers studies to low literacy rates and high levels of unemployment in the community.

The data analysis confirms the impression that residents in the MTHA community care deeply about the youth in the community, that they recognize that they are a vital part of the community

and that there is a need to ensure that they are integrated into the community's activities. Table 5.14 reveals some attitudes of residents towards their community's youth.

Of those who responded to these questions, it is apparent that there is a small majority (56%) feeling that youth are not encouraged to participate because their issues are not addressed. Some residents commented that the youth do not have enough activities around the community to keep them busy. On the other hand, a few residents felt that there were activities but had the perception that the types of activities segregated the children in the community. One resident said, "At the resource centre there tend to be more services for the blacks and immigrants, there is little for the white kids". Other residents felt that youth need to be heard more often. A large majority (78%), felt that youth should have the opportunity to hold their own meetings to address issues that concern them. Some residents felt that this should be a co-operative venture. "This would give them the chance to assume responsibility." Other residents felt that "there should be some club available for them to do things: they should be included with the adults." Forty-eight percent said that they would be interested in organizing and supporting youth with their issues. It is assumed that the percentage of residents willing to be actively involved was not as high because of the general fear that these residents have concerning the illegal activities that some of the youth are involved with.

communication methods and styles

The fourth section focused on the effectiveness of the communication strategies used in the MTHA community. It further explored residents' preference, regarding verbal and written communications styles, and the types of forums that are preferred for meetings.

A number of communication strategies have been used in the MTHA community over the years. Some have been more effective than others. The styles and strategies used in the community follow no particular standard and have largely depended on the group organizing the activities. Since the community agency started to organize the meetings, an attempt was made to reach out to more residents. An agenda and residence court representatives were used to keep residents informed about community activities. The court representatives, consisting of volunteers from each distinct area in the MTHA community, informed residents of upcoming meetings. This approach worked well in areas where there were a number of residents actively involved. In areas where there were not, court representatives were not as effective in motivating people to attend.

communication styles

The majority of the residents found out about community meetings through flyers. Although almost all of those surveyed said that they could read English, word of mouth was also very effective for the 'other' category, who felt that the personal invitation gave them more of a reason to attend. At one time flyers for meetings were not effective because of the manner in which they were distributed. The property- management staff would distribute the flyers but the majority of residents would not read them. Some residents said that the flyers were not easily distinguished from junk mail and often thrown out. Perhaps because the responsibility has now been divided among the residents, the information on the flyer is taken more seriously.

The analysis indicated that 88 percent of residents wished to be told about meetings through flyers, with 50 percent wishing a phone call (respondents could choose more than one response. A small number mentioned that an ethnic group leader or word of mouth was the best means.

There was an interesting difference when the above data were analyzed by the three categories (Table 5.15).

Seventy percent of the 'other' category said they would prefer someone to call them whereas the Caribbean and Caucasian categories did not rate this choice as high. This emphasizes the 'other' category's need for personal invitations.

language differences and preferences

One part of this section was developed to gain a better understanding of the issues that affect those who have difficulty with English and who were of a different cultural or ethno-racial group. The responses are summarized in Table 5.16.

Surprisingly, there was no specific area where the percentages were significant enough to indicate that these residents preferred special attention because of their language, cultural or ethno-racial differences. In fact, when the numbers are analyzed further one sees that many residents said that these areas did not apply to them.

meeting logistics

There was strong agreement that the current notice period for meetings was not enough, and that the agenda and a MTHA translation sheet (see Appendix K) should be distributed along with the flyer. Forty-percent felt that a two-day notice was sufficient, while 30 percent preferred three to five days. Most felt that even though a notice was required, they preferred meetings to take place on the same day of every month. Sixty-four percent of the residents preferred meetings to be held in the evenings, 20 percent wanted weekends, 11 percent preferred afternoons and five percent preferred morning meetings. Those who wanted meetings at times other than the evenings either worked shifts, had their hour of prayer in conflict with meetings or had young children to care for. Most willing respondents said that if meetings were well organized, two hours would be sufficient time for a residents' meeting. Thirty-five percent preferred meetings that lasted one hour, however, they realized that was probably not enough time to discuss all the issues. In contrast, 80 percent of the reluctant respondents suggested one hour meetings, while only 20 percent suggested two hours. Several residents suggested that there should be some time set aside for residents to mingle with each other. Having some food around or even encouraging residents to bake some cakes would help break some of the barriers between the residents.

logos

Although many residents did not accurately match the logos to the specific activity (see Figure 4), 67 percent recognized them and found them to be useful. Many felt that the logos were a symbol that was easily identified and helped residents to differentiate between community mail and junk mail. Some residents stated that it would be nice to see a competition where residents would develop a logo that represented the Flemingdon Park MTHA community.

meeting forums

The researchers tried to determine if there was a particular meeting forum that was preferred over another. Residents were asked if they liked small group meetings or town hall meetings, if they preferred an agenda, if the meetings were too formal, or if they wanted speakers to present issues. There was little variation in the responses amongst the three resident categories. Residents

preferred formal meetings where an agenda was followed. They liked the idea of speakers presenting issues and following this with a discussion. Residents felt strongly about discussing only the issues that were on the agenda. They felt that this is where a facilitator or a chairperson with an ability to control the residents was necessary. This would ensure that the discussions did not stray in other directions. Many recognized that most of the residents do not have the skills to do this and would probably require some form of training. When residents were asked if the solution would be to have a staff member chair the meetings, many disagreed because they wanted the residents to have control over the meetings.

Overall, the message heard is that most of the strategies currently being used are at least partly effective, but they alone are not sufficient in getting more people involved in the community. Residents wanted to see meetings that were focused, organized, timely and had some form of leadership. Residents also agreed that the organizers needed to place more emphasis on the manner in which the information is shared with residents. Whether, it is the notice period, the dates in which the meetings are held, or the information that goes out to the residents, it is necessary that the strategies be consistent. The lack of these qualities often discouraged residents from getting involved.

MTHA and the property-management company

The last section of the questionnaire looked to residents for feedback and suggestions to three areas. These were: to determine if there were any structural or institutional factors affecting resident participation, to obtain feedback on how to increase resident participation, and to find out how to share information with residents. This part of the questionnaire was not as structured as the other sections, and used four open-ended questions in an attempt to examine the above three areas.

residents' feedback on structural or institutional barriers to participation

It is evident that some of the situational factors that Mamman (1996) identifies, such as stereotypes, ethnocentrism, and prejudice, are difficult to measure; nevertheless, the questions were designed to raise these issues without leading the residents on and therefore creating biases in their responses. The first question asked residents if they felt that MTHA, the property-management company or community agencies were a barrier to their participation in the community, while the fourth question of this section asked residents for suggestions how MTHA management and the residents can improve their working relationship. The questions were asked separately and in this order in order to elicit a clearer picture of the issues at hand and to not lead residents.

An overwhelming number of those who responded to the first question said that MTHA, the property-management company and the agencies were not barriers to their participation. Table 5.16 shows that the differences between the willing and reluctant respondents were not significant. It was interesting to see that 37 percent of the willing respondents did not answer this question. It is not clear if this was do to fear.

Although many residents complained about the overall service provided by the property-management office situated in the Flemingdon Park MTHA Community, it was encouraging to see that this did not keep residents from attending meetings and caring about their community. The complaints mainly dealt with the office staff's attitudes and responsiveness.

The researchers saw five messages emerging from their time in the community. These were that residents felt that:

- there were possible repercussions to speaking out, such as being thrown out
- complaints were not taken seriously with regards to issues in the community or repairs or upgrades required in units
- management staff did not take the time to understand issues or complaints and, as a result, are often perceived to have lack of respect for residents, be racist or prejudiced
- management was not visible in the community and did not reach out to ethnic groups to help overcome negative perceptions
- management did not encourage cultural and ethno-racial groups to participate and to have a voice

It is not possible to assess the extent to which the issues discussed in the literature review relating to situational factors such as stereotypes, ethnocentrism, prejudice and the dominant-group factor, occur in the Flemingdon Park MTHA community without more conclusive research. The scope of this study was not to assess the prevalence of such factors, but to assess whether they were barriers. The findings indicate that, by and large, these issues do not keep residents from being involved. However, it cannot be known whether the current levels of participation, and the residents' definition of desired participation discussed earlier in this chapter, would change if the situational factors were present to a lesser extent.

When residents were asked to provide suggestions on how to improve working relationships, researchers were told that management needed to encourage more communication between residents and themselves. There is a need to build relationships with community leaders and to find innovative and creative activities that would increase commitment at both levels. Residents also said that there was a need to develop mutual respect and for management to be more pleasant and friendly. As one resident expressed herself,

Management needs to have more respect for residents - just because we live in public housing doesn't mean that people should be treated this way.

There was a lot of emphasis placed on the need for management training and education. The following comments support the literature review findings of Kirchmeyer and Cohen (1992) and Tator (1996), which highlight the value of staff training and barrier-free services. One resident said:

Re-educate management in regards to their role. Those answering the phone in the management office often don't know or provide you with incorrect information in response to any questions.

Another resident said:

Management should try to understand cultural barriers and work with residents who may have a language barrier. Management should try to work closer with the residents. Many Muslims don't want to have anything to do with management - residents feel they are treated differently.

Yet another resident felt the need for race relations training:

A list of ethnic reps on volunteer basis [is needed] so that language barriers could be overcome. Some ethnic groups feel that management is racist and has prejudiced views. There is a lack of respect, they are arrogant, impatient and patronizing.

Some residents had noticed a difference in the manner in which management staff have been dealing with residents over the last while. One resident said, "the property manager has seemed to tone down behaviour in last year". Others repeated comments such as "I think management is doing a good job", "they have been working with the residents and we seem to be making progress" and the "relationship is working okay, management seems to be working with residents".

residents' feedback on how to increase residents' participation

Residents were asked to provide suggestions or ideas on how to get more residents involved in community activities or meetings. The researchers felt that it was important to generate ideas from the residents, since they live in the community and know what works and what does not. The responses were overwhelming in volume and usefulness. There were many ideas provided that would be very simple to implement. These were categorized into four areas, communication strategies, social events, cultural and ethno-racial strategies and administrative improvements.

(i) communication strategies

The communication strategies suggested are straight forward. However, the findings of Fuerst (1988) and Katan (1991) presented in the literature review show that there is a need for co-operation between housing staff and residents in order for these strategies to be successful.

Residents' suggestions included the use of a community newsletter. This would give the residents an opportunity to be kept informed of past and future events, and to report on some of the residents' accomplishments. It would also draw upon many of the talents in the community. One resident strongly supported newsletters because they would help reduce crime:

Have a newsletter in which their involvement in community affairs is stressed as being important. Residents who are involved in their communities build stronger and better neighbourhoods. It builds a greater sense of identity.

The one caution that was pointed out several times during the interviews is that the newsletter should be a community effort and inclusive of all residents. Special effort would have to be made to ensure that the cultural and ethno-racial residents were also represented. Excluding those who were not interviewed because they required translators, the data shows that only a small number of residents had difficulty reading and understanding English. Thus, they may have the ability to submit articles or participate in different ways, although their ability to write in English was not captured in this research. Efforts would also have to be made so that children of these residents would submit articles, art or poems. This is supported by Tand and Kirkbride's (1986) research, which argues that it is critical to encourage participants from minority groups who might be less inclined to participate because of cultural values that may discourage assertiveness.

Flyers were also suggested as a means of keeping residents informed. Several residents suggested that the flyers should be easily identified and that their appearance should be consistent, either

through the use of colour, a logo or another identifier. Using neighbours or cultural or ethno-racial representatives to deliver flyers to residents homes was also suggested. Residents commented that efforts to keep residents informed would be more successful if several strategies were used in conjunction with one another.

Bulletin boards in each court and one outside the management office informing residents about community events, meeting agendas and minutes was another suggestion. There was some concern about them being vandalised, but it was suggested that they be protected under lock and key with public knowledge of the court representatives, who would have access to them.

Another resident suggested that one way to avoid the fear of speaking out about contentious issues at meetings was to "use secret ballots to make decisions on certain things". This suggestion could be applied to issues that are perceived to result in conflict amongst residents or issues that can be contentious with management.

(ii) social events

Well-organized social events were suggested as another means of getting residents to know one another and participate in the community gatherings. Organizing fun events where appropriate food would be used as a means of breaking down barriers would likely attract more residents. Some suggestions were community cultural days where residents would be encouraged to bring and try different kinds of foods, or community barbecues. Some respondents felt that residents would participate more if activities were organized around children. Another suggestion was to set aside 15 minutes before each meeting so that residents would get to know one another as they had some food and mingled. This would break down the language barrier and some residents' fear of management.

In the past residents in the Flemingdon Park MTHA community have organized several events. Some have been more successful than others. With more organization and better communication strategies these events can become a great success. More emphasis would have to be placed on reaching out to the cultural and ethno-racial residents who do not participate in these events.

(iii) cultural and ethno-racial strategies

There were some cultural and ethno-racial strategies suggested that require sensitivity, thought and specific attention. Residents suggested that a translation notice (see Appendix K) be sent out along with invitations to meetings or events. One resident felt that "management needs to take the time with non-Canadians to understand their issues. There are language barriers and a total lack of communication with ethnic groups". It was also suggested that there be "a representative from [each] ethnic background to work with management on a close basis for a better understanding of them". Another resident suggested that "we need to approach these residents through their leaders and elders, who know more about individual cultures, and persuade them to participate at the meetings". The above comments and the one that follows shows that there is a very strong awareness that these residents are isolated, and that this can lead to harassment. Thus, community members need to be drawn in through some extra effort.

We have to get across language barriers because we probably won't get across the cultural barrier. We need representatives from each cultural group and court group - they have to be organized. The isolation of various ethnic groups needs to be broken

because children are beginning to be picked on based on racism. Groups have to be reached out to [and we] need to explain all kinds of social activities to them.

(iv) administrative suggestions

With regards to administrative improvements, there were straight forward suggestions that would put residents at ease with the management staff and lessen the barriers that currently exist. Several times it was heard that there is a need for management to have more personal contact with residents, and a need to give residents assurance that the staff would not hold what was said against them. Informing residents about their rights, and the process by which complaints can be made would help eradicate the myth that residents can lose their housing for speaking out. One resident suggested that there was a "need to improve management's behaviour to residents and for them to develop relationships with residents". There was a consensus within the community that there was a division between management and residents. In order to break down this barrier one resident suggested:

Management should knock on people's doors and invite them to meetings (a few doors at a time). Management could plan an activity and invite residents personally. Management should make themselves more part of the community - not separate themselves.

Another resident was in agreement with this comment and added that it was especially important for management to personally invite the cultural and ethno-racial groups. This would definitely encourage people to attend. Many residents agreed that being visible in the community, chatting with residents and inviting them to various events would certainly decrease the perception of 'us and them'. There was also a suggestions that MTHA or property-management company should become more involved in organizing more activities for youth in the community. These suggestions are somewhat in conflict with the 1994 *Rebuilding MTHA* report, that recommended that MTHA focus on its property-management role and de-emphasize its involvement in the delivery of recreation. Residents themselves could organize and work closely with community agencies to get more activities for youth.

[Note: It appears that since this research was conducted management and residents have become more organized and have made some changes to the ways things were done. In September 1996 the first newsletter was published, flyers are being used more frequently, several social events have taken place, and residents are knocking on each others doors and encouraging others from cultural and ethno-racial groups to attend meetings. These simple changes have been effective in increasing awareness in the community and in getting more residents to participate. In order for these successes to continue, management and residents will need to make more effort.]

residents' feedback on information sharing

Residents were also asked to provide some suggestions on how management could better inform existing and new residents about management and operational issues. During Phase I of the research, general discussions with residents indicated that many residents were misinformed or unaware about policies, processes and the community's organizational structure. It was felt that this was an enormous barrier to the information-sharing process. This question attempted to generate some ideas as to how information could be better communicated.

Residents' suggestions were wide ranging, with some easier to implement than others. Information sharing could be done through notices or flyers posted in public areas, distributed at meetings, or given out when residents went into the office to pay their rent. It was even suggested that "management should give residents an opportunity to talk to them, and they should come around and talk to residents from time to time". Other strategies would be to give residents five minutes at each meeting so that they could clarify misconceptions or even have guest speakers or knowledgeable residents educate others. One resident said "somehow we have to get through to residents that management works for residents". It is necessary to "educate residents and inform them that it is possible to speak out against the authorities. Inform residents that they won't lose their housing for speaking against management". A welcome package that included a handbook that was easily understandable and explains some of the policies and processes could also be useful. One resident suggested that:

> *Management could include information about resident activities whenever a new resident joins the community. This could take the form of a welcome package with all the information on some of the agencies and community services available.*

In reviewing the responses to the four questions in this section, it is clear that the suggestions tend to overlap from one area to another. It is necessary to recognize that the strategies used for new residents might have to be different than those for the existing residents. This section helped provide a better picture of the issues confronting the community and provided an opportunity to hear some of the suggestions proposed by the residents.

In conclusion, contrary to what was thought during the initiation of this Flemingdon Park demonstration study, barriers to full and active participation especially amongst the cultural and ethno-racial residents are not significantly different than those affecting the rest of the community. The data analysis showed that the majority of their barriers are part of the general issues that exist in any housing community.

The discussions also alluded to the fact that the Caribbean and Caucasian residents are more involved than the 'other' category. This group has to be encouraged to become more active so that they can be drawn out and become integrated into the rest of the MTHA community. The Caribbean and Caucasian residents along with the help of the property-management staff should work towards creating and enhancing a more cohesive and diverse community. Creating opportunities for residents to mix and giving residents in the 'other' category, which in itself is ethnically diverse, an opportunity to interact with the other two more predominant groups will only strengthen the community. Participation models used in the past should be modified to incorporate some of the residents' feedback and suggestions as to ensure that those who participate are representative of the community at large.

Summary

The analysis of the data shows that the socio-demographic characteristics of both the willing and reluctant participants are representative of the sample obtained during the preliminary field research. There was also no significant differences between the responses of the two groups.

The discussion showed that the majority of participants at meetings are the Caribbean and Caucasian residents, and that the length of residency enhances participation rates. English not being the home language for almost half of the residents can act as a barrier to participation.

Limited language skills will require group organizers to use different types of communication strategies. A number of other issues were identified as possible barriers. Exposure to community activities and more involvement in community life will develop a comfort level and enable residents to participate more frequently.

The Flemingdon Park MTHA community care about their youth. Residents recognize that youth are a vital part of the community and they need to be integrated into the community's activities.

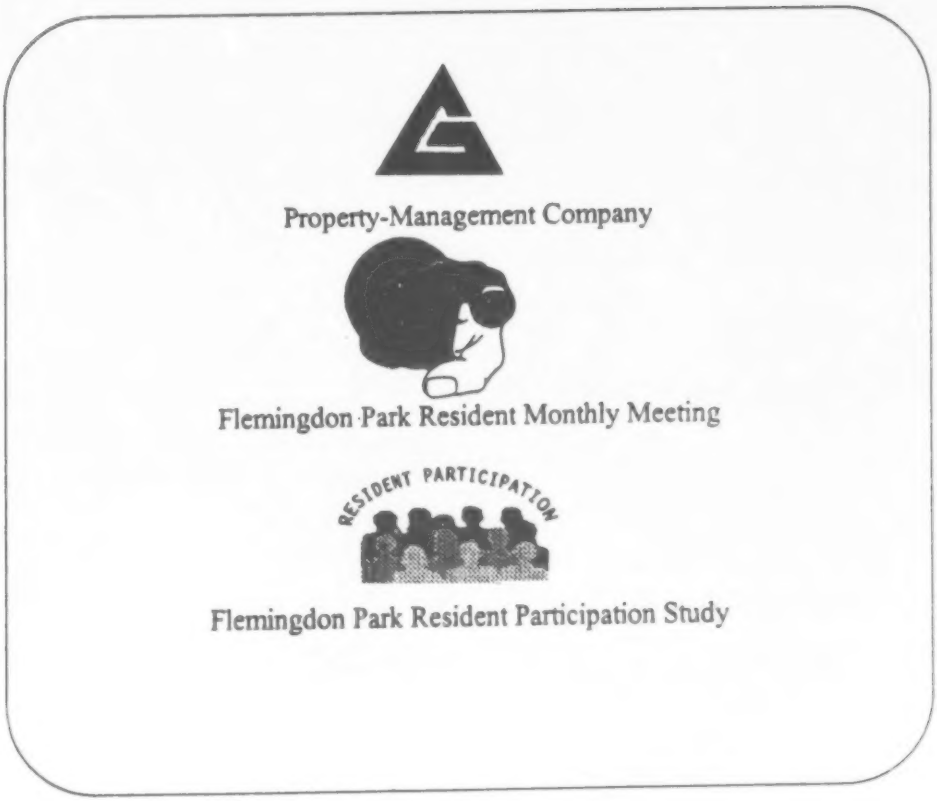
Most of the communication strategies currently being used are effective, but not sufficient to increase participation rates. Focused, organized, and timely meetings with some form of leadership is required. The manner in which information is shared and consistency are vital qualities that will ensure success.

An overwhelming number of residents said that neither MTHA, the property-management company or the community agencies were factors affecting their participation. However, residents still complained about the attitudes and responsiveness of the office staff. Suggestions for areas of improvement included increased communication between residents and staff, and the need for management training and education. Noticeable differences had been seen over the last year on how management staff dealt with residents possibly owing to enhanced training.

Other suggestions related to ways in which more residents should get involved. These included four areas: communication strategies, social events, cultural and ethno-racial strategies and administrative improvements. The last area of suggestions related to ways in which management could better inform existing and new residents about management and operational issues. These included better information-sharing strategies, correcting misconceptions and educating residents, whether at meetings or through welcome packages. The key is to recognize that the strategies used will have to differ for new and existing residents.

There are several factors that may have affected residents willingness to participate in Phase II of the study. These include the community dynamics that existed during the course of the research, the lack of resolution and closure on old issues in the community and poor relationships between some residents and the property-management staff.

Figure 4: Logos used in the community



5.1 Socio-Demographic Variables - Distribution among Willing Participants		
Variable	**Category**	**Percentage**
Age	24 and under 25-58 59+ not specified	3 88 6 3
Length of Residency at Flemingdon Park	5 or less 6-10 11-15 16+	42 26 15 17
Sex	male female	27 73
Mother Tongue/ Place of Origin/ Ethnicity	Caribbean Caucasian other	53 25 22

5.2 Socio-Demographic Variables - Distribution among Reluctant Participants		
Variable	**Category**	**Percentage**
Age	24 and under 25-58 59+	100
Length of Residency at Flemingdon Park	5 or less 6-10 11-15 16+	30 30 20 20
Sex	male female	30 70
Mother Tongue/ Place of Origin/ Ethnicity	Caribbean Caucasian other	20 60 20

5.3 Home Languages Distribution among Willing Participants		
Home Language	**Number of Participants**	**Percent of Participants**
English	50	56.2
Somali [Somalia]	2	2.3
Gujarati [India/East Africa]	3	3.4
Amharic/Tigringa/Oromo [Ethiopia]	5	5.6
Persian/Farsi [Iran]	3	3.4
Urdu [India]	5	5.6
Greek	1	1.1
Cantonese/Mandarin	2	2.3
Twi [West Africa]	3	3.4
Pashto [Afghanistan/Pakistan]	3	3.4
Vietnamese	1	1.1
Korean	1	1.1
Hindi/Punjabi [India]	2	2.3
Swahili [East Africa]	1	1.1
French	5	5.6
Italian	1	1.1
Macedonian	1	1.1
	89	100

5.4 Correspondence Languages Distribution among Willing Participants		
Language for Correspondence	**Number of Participants**	**Percent of Participants**
English	87	97.8
French	1	1.1
Pashto	1	1.1
	89	100

5.5 Type of Participant by Desired Participation										
Desired Participation	**No Response**		**Work Closely with MTHA**		**Informed and Consulted Only**		**Did not want to Participate**		**Total**	
Type of Participant	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Willing Participants	4	5	36	40	42	47	7	8	89	100
Reluctant Participants	2	20	3	30	3	30	2	20	10	100

5.6 Type of Participant by Past Participation Level								
Past Participation Level	**No Response**		**Most or Some Community Meetings**		**None of the Community Meetings**		**Total**	
Type of Participant	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Willing Participants	2	2	53	60	34	38	89	100
Reluctant Participants	0	0	4	40	6	60	10	100

5.7 Type of Participant and Past Participation Level by Length of Residency										
Participant Type	**Length of Residency**	**5 Years or Less**		**6-10 Years**		**11+ Years**		**No response**	
	Participation Levels	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Willing	Most or Some Community Meetings	10	33	22	61	21	68	2	2
	None of the Community Meetings	17	57	11	31	6	19		
Reluctant	Most or Some Community Meetings	2	7	0	0	2	6	0	0
	None of the Community Meetings	1	3	3	8	2	6		
Total		30	100	36	100	31	100	2	100

5.8 Ethnic Category of Willing Participants by Past Participation Level								
Participation Levels	**No Response**		**Most or Some Community Meetings**		**None of the Community Meetings**		**Total**	
Ethnic Category	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Caribbean	2	100	27	51	18	53	47	53
other	0	0	11	21	9	26	20	22
Caucasian	0	0	15	28	7	21	22	25
Total	2	100	53	100	34	100	89	100

5.9 Past Participation Level by Ethnic Category of Willing Participants								
Ethnic Category	**Caribbean**		**other**		**Caucasian**		**Total**	
Participation Levels	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
No Response	2	4	0	0	0	0	2	2
Most or Some Community Meetings	27	58	11	55	15	68	53	60
None of the Community Meetings	18	38	9	45	7	32	34	38
Total	47	100	20	100	22	100	89	100

5.10 Reasons for not Participating by Length of Residency			
Reasons (respondents could choose more than one reason)	**5 Years or Less**	**6-10 Years**	**11+ Years**
	%	%	%
Don't know all the people and feel uncomfortable	26	24	13
Not interested in meeting my neighbours	11	21	17
Don't know my rights as a resident	52	33	28
Don't know where to obtain information about meetings	37	15	21
Meetings are not well organized	22	24	45
Nothing ever happens as a result of these meetings	33	36	59
Don't know enough about what's going on	70	42	24

5.11 Reasons for not Participating by Ethnic Category			
Ethnic Category	**Caribbean**	**Other**	**Caucasian**
Reasons (respondents could choose more than one reason)	%	%	%
Don't know all the people and feel uncomfortable	19	20	27
Not interested in meeting my neighbours	17	15	18
Don't know my rights as a resident	43	30	32
Don't know where to obtain information about meetings	26	35	0
Meetings are not well organized	28	0	50
Nothing ever happens as a result of these meetings	36	35	64
Don't know enough about what's going on	49	0	0

5.12 Distribution of Types of Possible Language Barriers										
	No Response		Agree		Disagree		Doesn't Apply		Total	
Possible Language Barriers	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
I have difficulty understanding English	2	2.3	7	7.9	17	19.1	63	70.8	89	100
I'm not comfortable speaking English	2	2.3	11	12.4	13	14.6	63	70.8	89	100
I'm not comfortable reading English	2	2.3	5	5.6	19	21.4	63	70.8	89	100

5.13 Distribution of Types of Fear amongst Willing Participants										
	No Response		Agree		Disagree		Doesn't Apply		Total	
Types of Fear	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
I'm afraid to walk to meetings at night	1	1.1	34	38.2	53	59.6	1	1.1	89	100
I'm afraid of youth in the community	1	1.1	33	37.1	54	60.7	1	1.1	89	100
I'm afraid of some neighbours at the meetings	3	3.4	15	16.8	70	78.7	1	1.1	89	100
I'm afraid that my neighbours will hold what I say against me	2	2.3	22	24.7	65	73	0	0	89	100
I'm afraid that management staff will hold what I say against me	4	4.5	19	21.4	66	74.1	0	0	89	100
I'm afraid to participate in things that have to do with government	2	2.3	10	11.2	76	85.4	1	1.1	89	100

5.14 Distribution of Opinions on Youth						
	Agree		Disagree		Total	
Opinions on Youth	#	%	#	%	#	%
Youth are not encouraged to participate because their issues are not addressed	44	55.7	34	43	79	100
Youth should have the opportunity to hold their own meetings to address issues that concern them	65	78.3	18	21.7	83	100
Would be interested in organizing and supporting youth with their issues	38	47.5	42	52.5	80	100

5.15 Ethnic Category of Willing Participants by Communication Wishes				
Communication Wishes (respondents could choose more than one)	Wish to read flyer to get information about meetings		Wish that someone telephone me and tell me about meetings	
Ethnic Category of Willing Participants	#	%	#	%
Caribbean	41	46	21	24
other	17	19	14	16
Caucasian	20	22	10	11
All	78	88	45	50

5.16 Distribution of Language Preferences among "Other" Ethnic Category								
Language Preferences (respondents could choose more than one)	Agree		Disagree		Doesn't Apply		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Would feel more comfortable if there was a translator at meetings	4	20	7	35	9	45	20	100
Would feel more comfortable if there was a separate meeting for my language	4	20	7	35	9	45	20	100
Would feel more comfortable having another resident from my ethnic group speak on my behalf	2	10	10	50	8	40	20	100
Would attend more meetings if the notices were translated	5	25	9	45	6	30	20	100
Feel that it is necessary to translate information into my own language	4	20	8	40	8	40	20	100
Prefer meetings with people from my own cultural/ racial/ethnic group	3	15	11	55	6	30	20	100

5.17 Distribution of responses to question asking if MTHA/Property Management/Agencies were Barriers to Participation								
	No Response		Yes		No		Total	
Type of participant	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Willing Participants	33	37	7	8	49	55	89	100
Reluctant Participants	1	10	1	10	8	80	10	100

Chapter 6

STRENGTHENING RESIDENT PARTICIPATION: STRATEGIES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter discusses potential strategies and recommendations for strengthening resident participation in the Flemingdon Park MTHA community. It concludes with an assessment of the broader applicability of the research findings for other housing communities.

Through the survey responses, MTHA's residents living in Flemingdon Park have indicated an interest in becoming more involved in the life of their community. However an important conclusion is that there are limitations on the degree to which residents can become involved without some form of assistance from their housing provider in community-building and in strengthening the relationships between residents and between residents and staff. This report has identified a number of strategies to encourage a higher level of participation and dialogue.

Resident Participation: A Gap in Expectations

One of the major conclusions of this study has been to identify a gap in expectations with regard to resident participation. Most housing providers and property managers are open to the concept of resident participation but feel that there is a responsibility on the part of residents to become organized and to identify issues of common concern. However, as the results of this study confirm, residents feel that it is not possible for them to achieve a meaningful level of involvement without some assistance from their housing provider in helping to create a positive framework and to be proactive in engaging them in dialogue. As the Flemingdon Park MTHA community has demonstrated, this gap in expectations exists as one of the primary barriers to more effective participation regardless of the residents' cultural and ethno-racial background.

The following template provides a range of strategies that can be adopted to strengthen resident involvement. It is understood that community participation in any community is a very complex social phenomenon and that many factors can affect its success. The template is not an attempt to simplify what is complex but to capture the individual items that the research indicates are needed. These strategies are organized into five main categories:

- ensuring effective and productive meetings
- communicating and disseminating information
- building stronger community relationships
- integrating and strengthening the involvement of cultural and ethno-racial residents
- encouraging greater involvement of youth.

In the template that follows, concrete and practical actions are put forward.

STRATEGIES FOR:

1. Ensuring Effective and Productive Meetings of Property Managers with Residents

outreach

- use community court representatives to spread the word about meetings, actives or events
- encourage existing groups to invite neighbours, especially ethnic residents
- have ethnic group leaders reach out to their group and encourage them to come to meetings
- make an effort to use personal invitations
- communicate the availability of free childcare
- use flyers

flyers

- deliver reminders of scheduled meetings 2-5 days in advance
- hand out when residents pay their rent or have community court representatives deliver flyers
- use consistent identifiers e.g. logos, colour of paper
- include translation notice (see appendix I)
- indicate availability of free childcare

agenda

- have items submitted one week in advance
- have materials to be discussed available one week in advance
- allot time frames to each item and allow ample time to hear residents' concerns
- make last item on agenda be new business
- discuss only items on the agenda

meeting minutes

- rotate responsibility of minute taking
- allow residents to use staff and equipment resources
- take action minutes indicating what action to be taken, by whom and within what time frame logistics
- hold meetings on same day of every month
- agree on and announce the next meeting date
- have meetings for no longer than two hours
- ensure rooms are booked long enough to have free time before or after meetings
- use 15 minutes of meeting for residents to mingle and have some food
- budget some money for beverages and food
- have training sessions on how to run meetings
- make childcare available
- inform residents that a staff person is available at the end of meeting to address personal concerns

reducing fear at meetings

- reiterate residents' rights and responsibilities
- emphasise safety and security and 'safety in numbers' concept
- use secret ballots for contentious issues
- use a box where residents can drop off concerns anonymously

meeting format

- make meetings formal (e.g. Robert's rules of order)
- have trained chairperson run meetings
- have speakers discuss issues and follow this by timed discussion
- allow written contributions to be part of meeting records
- give residents an opportunity to decide some of the agenda items for the next meeting

2. Communicating and Disseminating Information

community profile

- create a centralized mailing list
- develop data on language spoken at home, language of correspondence, and residents' reading, understanding and speaking ability
- keep community profile updated

new residents in community

- create a welcome package
- produce a residents' handbook explaining policies and procedures
- check on new residents 2-3 weeks after moving in to answer questions or clarify issues
- inform residents of their rights
- communicate process by which complaints or concerns can be filed

community building

- emphasize developing good two-way communication strategies
- conduct good preparatory work before initiating any strategy
- develop a community logo through a competition for children
- use logo on all communiqués for the community
- use joint logos for communiqué's from management and resident group
- develop a list of commonly asked questions and answers and circulate to residents or post on bulletin board
- use fact sheets to share information or clarify misconceptions
- produce a newsletter that is a community effort and inclusive of all cultural and ethnic-racial groups

- ensure newsletter's message and language are inclusive of all groups
- ensure newsletter's editor encourages parents to submit articles, poems and art on children's behalf
- work with existing resident groups and build on them
- provide training and development for resident groups
- establish a financial base for community group's expenses, through contributions and fund-raising
- communicate continuously with residents so that when they see things are changing they understand why

bulletin boards

- locate a board in each community court or area
- have the community court representative or a resident in each area responsible for keeping the board up to date
- seek feedback on presentation of the board from residents in the community court or area
- place a board outside management office
- put up important items such as flyers, notices, meeting agendas and minutes
- have a section for children's art and poems

*3. **Building Stronger Community Relationships***

resident recognition

- recognize resident volunteers publicly and personally
- use newsletter to acknowledge the work of resident volunteers

staff initiatives

- be pleasant and friendly with residents
- tell residents about their rights and responsibilities
- clarify misconceptions that residents can be thrown out of housing for speaking out
- take work orders at meetings and follow-up 2-3 days later with a phone call explaining status of work order

reducing fear

- tell residents that there is no need to fear authority and that there are no repercussions for speaking out
- provide a forum where residents can speak about their concerns as part of a group
- promote a sense of community
- do not tolerate victimization of residents

training and education

- make sure staff have client service training
- make sure staff have conflict-management training
- make sure staff have cultural-sensitivity training
- make sure staff have anti-racism and anti-discrimination training

communication

- discuss personal issues in the privacy of an enclosed office
- establish a communication strategy for returning residents' calls, (e.g. 1 or 2 business days)
- take the time to understand the issues of those who have difficulties with English, encourage them to bring someone who can speak on their behalf
- establish a resident/staff working group
- clarify and set guidelines as to which policies can be modified and which cannot

building relationships with management

- don't assume that management's decisions are a form of prejudice or racism; they may be based on policy that applies to everyone
- understand that when resources are limited, it may be necessary to do some things before or instead of others

building relationships with residents

- encourage communication among residents to decrease the perception of 'us and them'
- build relationships with community leaders
- build relationships with ethnic leaders to better understand their issues
- recognize that 100 percent participation is unrealistic
- recognize that residents have certain expectations; if they cannot be met this should be publicly addressed
- recognize that there are varying degrees of participation levels
- be clear with residents regarding intention (e.g. sharing information versus seeking feedback)
- recognize that lack of participation does not mean residents are not interested in their community
- understand and recognize that residents may need guidance and support with community development
- encourage alternative ways to participate for those who work shifts or have evening prayer
- find innovative and creative activities that will increase commitment
- watch for burnout among group leaders
- provide support to community leaders where possible to address burnout

visibility

- walk around community and talk with residents
- invite residents personally to meetings

- focus on personal invitations to cultural and ethno-racial residents and new residents
- visit new residents to ensure they feel welcome to participate and do not have any outstanding issues

social events
- organize fun social events (e.g. cultural days, cultural exchanges, community barbecues)
- organize activities with an emphasis on children
- provide financial assistance and staff resources for social events
- network with the community businesses and agencies to obtain assistance with community activities; this should be initiated by residents' groups
- encourage networking and informal social supports among residents

4. Strengthening the Involvement of Cultural and Ethno-Racial Residents

difficulty in communicating in a meeting format
- encourage residents to communicate through others who have greater fluency in English
- encourage residents to write their concerns in their own language and have them translated by those who can

social events
- invite ethnic groups to bring and try different kinds of food
- ensure selection of foods are culturally acceptable so that all groups can be comfortable
- provide separate barbecues for specific food preparations where needed

gender
- encourage both women and men to participate in community meetings
- encourage single mothers to become involved and help them recognize that they can make positive contributions to their community

staff and resident groups
- ensure that residents at meetings represent the diversity in the community
- encourage residents at meetings to voice their opinions
- encourage residents to attend meetings and events through personal invitations (e.g. phone calls or knock on door)
- recruit ethnic group leaders to assist with community outreach
- provide opportunities for ethnic group leaders to work with staff to develop a better understanding of each other
- use community representatives and ethnic group leaders to reach out and invite residents to meetings and social events

- provide residents with cross-cultural education programs that focus on breaking barriers to social interaction

religious interference
- make minutes available for those who cannot attend meetings because they are held during time of worship
- make sure public meetings are inclusive of all religious affiliations

5. Encouraging Greater Involvement of Youth

meetings
- hold parallel meetings just for youth
- help youth organize, run, facilitate and chair their own meetings
- consider their opinions, concerns and suggestions seriously

outreach
- have community outreach staff or volunteers work with youth initially
- provide opportunities for youth to be mentored
- provide computer training
- provide access to computer equipment

community volunteers
- recruit community members that are willing to work with youth
- provide them with training and education
- ensure volunteers do not control youth, instead work with them and eventually let them be on their own

In addition...
It is worth recalling here Peterman's (1994) four conditions for successful resident participation:
- adequate and continuing resources for operating and subsidies, modernization, and technical assistance
- a pre-existing, resident-based organizing effort
- an atmosphere of creative tension between residents and the housing authority
- and strong ties between resident organizations and other community institutions.

A combination of the template's strategies and Peterman's conditions is needed to narrow or close this 'expectation gap' and bring property-management staff and residents closer to an understanding of the necessary roles and available resources for successful participation. Regardless of the strategies adopted, it is necessary that the housing agency, landlord or management company and the community groups are committed to participation and act consistently in support of the approach.

Implications of the Study Findings for the Flemingdon Park MTHA Community

Residents, property management staff and MTHA expressed a willingness to take a closer look at the study findings and to work together to identify creative solutions. The following are key considerations which need to be addressed by each of these stakeholders:

residents

In working to strengthen resident involvement, there needs to be a recognition of the importance of developing an inclusive process. Resident groups need to be more proactive and ensure that they represent a cross-section of the community. Residents of all age groups and from diverse cultural and ethno-racial backgrounds need to be made to feel that they are welcome and and are valuable contributors to the work of the group. Recruiting youth and ethnic group leaders to assist with community outreach and encouraging residents to attend meetings and events through personal invitations, are two of many ways to diversify resident group representation.

Residents need to recognize that there is little new money available because of budgetary constraints. Solutions will need to be creative and residents will need to work closely with management and staff to identify them. Residents must learn more about the process through which policies and procedures are developed and implemented in order to understand management decisions better. Residents need to convey to staff the need to get their input before policies and procedures are developed, and to explain them clearly once they are in place.

property-management staff

To maintain a high level of resident participation, staff must be proactive in encouraging resident participation as well as broadening the base of that participation. Being visible in the community, chatting with residents and inviting them to various events, for example, would certainly decrease the perception of 'us and them'. Residents want to see the property-management staff play a stronger facilitating role in assisting residents to get organized and providing financial, technical and administrative resources and expertise.

Residents need to know and feel that their involvement is welcomed at all times, even if they do not have a high level of participation. Participation levels will fluctuate depending on the issues at hand. It should not be assumed that the lack of participants means that there is no interest in their community.

Management staff can assist in creating and enhancing a cohesive cultural and ethno-racial community and help foster an environment where diversity is welcomed. For example, a continuing program of social events that involve children can help break down cultural and ethno-racial barriers.

MTHA

Through its partnership with CMHC in facilitating this study and other resident involvement initiatives, MTHA has demonstrated a strong corporate commitment to resident participation. The study findings indicate that the residents support this commitment and seek to encourage MTHA to continue to build on its proactive approach.

A major point that arose from the research is that MTHA should be very careful not to accidentally raise residents' expectations. For example, during consultations, it is crucial to clarify from the outset their purpose. If a meeting is called simply to share MTHA information with residents then it must be made clear that it is not a meeting to obtain feedback.

To better serve the assisted-housing communities, it would be helpful to develop community profiles. Staff need a clear understanding of the community's needs to be able to address them.

Applicability of Findings to Other Housing Communities

As the population of Canada's towns and cities become increasingly diverse, many communities will be taking a closer look at strategies to strengthen the participation of residents from a variety of cultural and ethno-racial groups. While this study has focused on one assisted-housing community in a suburb of Toronto, the results have a broader applicability to other communities including other assisted-housing, non-profits, co-operatives and condominiums, especially where there is a very diverse population.

With careful implementation, a willingness for social integration and an understanding of diversity, the strategies identified in this report could prove successful in strengthening and in maintaining a high level of resident involvement.

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APPENDIX A

Description of Literature Search

The literature search on cultural and ethno-racial barriers to participation began with the housing literature on resident participation. Housing officials and academics who may have known of relevant literature were consulted. Contacts were also made via the Internet with housing researchers elsewhere who may have known of relevant literature. These contacts did not prove very helpful other than confirming that there is limited relevant literature within the area of housing studies and housing management.

Mari Wilson, MLS, a professional librarian with expertise in searching electronic databases, carried out extensive keyword searches of the Internet and of numerous periodical literature databases. Described below is the detailed breakdown of the search terms and combinations used. Some of the terms used in the freetext portions are somewhat inconsistent. This is due to the progressive familiarity with the subject area, variations in the subject indexing of the different CD-ROMs, as well as an assessment of a satisfactory number and quality of hits to be returned. Virtually all of the literature cited in this review came from these database searches.

Internet

search engines: AltaVista & Excite & Yahoo & InfoSeek

ProQuest Direct

1. tenant participation or tenant management
2. subject(minority and ethnic groups) and subject(hous*) and freetext(barrier* or participation)

ABI Inform

- same as ProQuest Direct

CBCA (Canadian Business and Current Affairs)

1. tenant w/3[within 3 words] (participation or barrier* or management)

Sociofile

1. tenant particip* or resident particip* or tenant management
2. subject descriptors(cultur* or ethnic* or racial or ethnocultur*) AND
   (a) subject descriptors(access or limitations or problems or opportunities)
   (b) title(barrier* or factor* or (discrimination and hous*) or access* or particip* or overcoming)

PsychLit

- same as Sociofile. Sociofile & PsychLit use same software, indexing is very similar.

PAIS (Public Affairs Information Service)

1. subject descriptors (cultur* or ethnic* or racial or ethnocultur*) AND title(barrier* or factor* or (discrimination and hous*) or access* or particip* or overcoming
2. Same as number 1 but with the (and housing) requirement removed from (b)
3. (tenant or housing) and freetext (participation)

Dissertation Abstracts -This search was restricted to 1988-1995

1. tenant participation or tenant management org* or resident participation
2. freetext(ethnic* or racial or immigrant* or cultural) AND title(participation or barriers or factors or differences or access)

Social Work Abstracts

1. tenant participation or tenant management org* or resident participation
2. subject(minority or ethnic or ethno*) AND title(participation or barrier* or access*)
3. subject(minority or ethnic or ethno*) AND (limitation* or problems or opportunit*)

CMHC SCHL

Helping to house Canadians

Question habitation, comptez sur nous

Ontario Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority

Commission de logement de la Communauté urbaine de Toronto

APPENDIX B

PARTICIPATE!

IT'S YOUR COMMUNITY

August 15, 1995

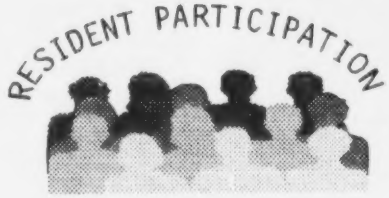
As you know, MTHA and CMHC are involved in an exciting study on resident participation. The purpose of the study is to find ways to encourage your participation and to find out what may have prevented you from participating in the decisions that affect the Flemingdon Park Community.

In June, we told you we were making changes to the study's approach. We also said that we would be asking for your ideas. Beginning with the week of August 21-25, 1995, I will be coming around to talk to some of you.

MTHA and CMHC remain committed to building strong resident participation at Flemingdon Park. I look forward to meeting you. I hope you will join in this important study and share your thoughts and experiences.

If you would like more information, or if you have any questions please call.

Irene Pereira
Portfolio Management Officer
CMHC
495-2000, ext. 3031



CMHC SCHL

Helping to house Canadians

Question habitation, comptez sur nous

Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority

Ontario

Commission de logement de la Communauté urbaine de Toronto

APPENDIX C

September 9, 1996

Dear,

If you recall, I spoke to you last fall about a study on resident participation. The purpose of the study is to find ways to encourage your participation and to find out what has prevented you from participating in the past.

I appreciated the comments you gave me when we last spoke. I would therefore like to meet with you, and a few other residents to answer a questionnaire on resident participation. It was developed with the help of three residents. In the next week, either myself or **Adam Di Pasquale** will call you to set up a time. If you have any questions, please give me a call at 218-3345.

In the fall, residents said that some of the reasons they didn't get involved were because of:

- not knowing about meetings and other events,
- lack of confidence in "things" getting done,
- fear of management and some neighbours and,
- lack of time due to shift work and/or the need to care for young children.

I'm now ready to find out more about these issues. The questionnaire will look at why residents do not get involved with activities and events in Flemingdon Park. It will be used to interview other residents who showed an interest in the study.

MTHA and CMHC remain committed to building strong resident participation at Flemingdon Park. We believe that by working together we can make a difference! I look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Irene Pereira
Portfolio Management Officer

CMHC SCHL
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Ontario
Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority
Commission de logement de la Communauté urbaine de Toronto

PARTICIPATE!!!!

IT'S YOUR COMMUNITY

LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

APPENDIX D

CMHC SCHL
Helping to house Canadians
Question habitation, comptez sur nous

Metropolitan Toronto Housing Authority
Ontario
Commission de logement de la communauté urbaine de Toronto

APPENDIX D

PARTICIPATE!
IT'S YOUR COMMUNITY

MTHA and CMHC are involved in an exciting study on resident participation. The purpose of the study is to find ways to encourage your participation in the decisions that affect the Flemingdon Park Community. Everyone, regardless of race, colour, ethnicity, nationality, gender or age is invited to participate.

Recently, we have made changes in the approach to the study. We are continuing to explore new ways to encourage resident participation. Soon, we will be asking for your input and ideas.

MTHA and CMHC remain committed to building strong resident participation at Flemingdon Park. We thank those of you who have already participated in the study, and we invite others to join in and participate too.

We would like to hear from you! Please call us for further information.

Irene Pereira
Portfolio Management Officer
CMHC
495-2000 #3031

Lou Canton
Manager, Operations (Act.)
MTHA
969-6148

VOICI UN DOCUMENT TRES IMPORTANT. S'IL VOUS EST IMPOSSIBLE DE LE LIRE, S'IL VOUS PLAIT LE FAIRE TRADUIRE SANS DELAI.	
	這是一份重要的文件。如果你看不懂，請立即找人為你翻譯其中內容。
यह एक बहुत जरूरी दस्तावेज है। यदि आप इसे न पढ़ सकें तो जल्दी से जल्दी इस का अनुवाद करवा लें।	
هذا مستند هام. إذا لم تستطع قراءته، رجاء ان تجعل شخص اخر يترجم لك محتواه فوراً.	
เอกสารนี้สำคัญมาก. ถ้าคุณอ่านไม่ได้, ขอให้คนอื่นแปลเนื้อหาในนี้ให้คุณโดยเร็ว.	
این مدرک مهمی است. اگر نمی توانید آنرا بخوانید، از شخص دیگری بخواهید که محتوی آنرا فوراً برای شما ترجمه نماید.	
	Questo documento è importante. Se non è in grado di leggerlo La preghiamo di farsene tradurre immediatamente il contenuto.
	To jest ważny dokument. Jeżeli treść tego dokumentu nie jest zrozumiała, prosimy natychmiast zwrócić się do kogoś o przetłumaczenie jego.
Tani waa dukumenti muhiim ah. Haddaad akhrin kari waydo, fadlan si dhakhso ah u raadi qof kuu tarjuma waxyaabaha ku qoran.	
นี่คือหนังสือสำคัญมาก ถ้าหากว่าคุณอ่านไม่ได้ โปรดหานายภาษามาแปลเอกสารนี้ ให้ คุณทันที	Đây là một văn kiện quan trọng. Nếu bạn không thể đọc được thì xin hãy nhờ người nào dịch nội dung cho bạn ngay lập tức.

Section A:

Please check (✓) one of the following:

1. My view of Resident Participation is:

-1-	-2-	-3-	-4-	-5-
I don't want to participate in anything that happens at Flemingdon Park. ❑	I would like MTHA to provide the basic services. I would like them to keep me informed and consult with me only when needed. ❑	I would like to have a say in the services that MTHA offers. ❑	I would like to work with MTHA on issues that interest me. ❑	I would like to work closely with MTHA on all the issues that affect the quality of life in Flemingdon Park. ❑

2. In the last year I have attended:

- ❑ Most of the community meetings
- ❑ Some of the community meetings
- ❑ None of the community meetings

Section B:

Please check (√) one of the following.

1. PERSONAL REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING	1 AGREE	2 DIS-AGREE	3 DOESN'T APPLY	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
I feel that I'm too old to go to meetings.				
I feel it is my husband's/wife's role to go to meetings.				
I don't know all the people and I feel uncomfortable in large groups.				
My wife/husband doesn't want to participate therefore, I don't want to go to meetings alone.				
I'm not interested in meeting my neighbours.				
I'm not interested in getting to know the community.				
I don't know my rights as a resident.				
I don't know where to obtain information about meetings.				
I don't know enough about what's going on to make a valuable contribution.				

Please check (✓) one of the following.

2. CHILDCARE REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING	1 AGREE	2 DIS-AGREE	DOESN'T APPLY	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
I can't afford to pay for someone to look after my children.				
I don't have anyone to care for my children.				
I can't attend because meetings conflict with the amount of time I have to spend with my children.				

3. TIME AVAILABILITY REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING	1 AGREE	2 DIS-AGREE	DOESN'T APPLY	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
I can't find time because I work shifts.				
I can't attend because meetings conflict with my time for worship.				
I can't find time because I'm too busy with other activities inside Flemingdon Park.				
I can't find time because I'm involved with other activities outside Flemingdon Park.				

4. LANGUAGE REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING	1 AGREE	2 DIS-AGREE	DOESN'T APPLY	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
I have difficulty understanding English.				
I'm not comfortable speaking English.				
I'm not comfortable reading English.				

Please check (✓) one of the following.

5. CULTURE / ETHNICITY / RACE REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING	1 AGREE	2 DIS-AGREE	DOESN'T APPLY	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
In my culture meetings do not occur.				
I feel that I can't participate because in my culture women don't participate in activities.				
I feel that my participation is not valued because I'm from a different cultural/ racial/ ethnic background.				
I feel that other residents don't accept my cultural.				

Please check (√) one of the following.

6. FEAR REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING	1 AGREE	2 DIS-AGREE	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
I'm afraid to walk to around the community at night.			
I'm afraid of the youth in the community.			
I'm afraid of some my neighbours.			
I'm afraid that my neighbours will hold what I say against me.			
I'm afraid that management staff will hold what I say against me.			
I'm afraid to participate in things that have to do with government.			
In the fall, some of you said that you didn't participate because of "Fear of Management and some Neighbours". Give me some examples of what you mean by this?			

7. Please rank the **three** main reasons why you don't participate or get more involved in community meetings.

1 ☐ Personal reasons
2 ☐ Lack of childcare
3 ☐ Lack of time
4 ☐ Language barrier
5 ☐ Cultural/ethnic/racial reasons
6 ☐ Fear
7 ☐ Management
8 ☐ Uncomfortable with some residents
9 ☐ Little gets done
10 ☐ Other _____
11 ☐ Doesn't apply

Section C:

Please place a check (✓) beside the following questions.

1. COMMUNICATION

I find out about residents' meetings through

- ❑ word of mouth
- ❑ flyers
- ❑ I'm not told about residents' meetings

The best way to let me know about a meeting is _____

I would need _____ days notice to inform me about community meetings

Do you find logos useful?

❑ Yes ❑ No

Please check (√) one of the following.

2. MEETINGS PREFERENCES **IF YOU WERE TO ATTEND MEETINGS, WHAT TYPE OF MEETINGS WOULD YOU PREFER?**	**1** **AGREE**	**2** **DIS-AGREE**		**DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?**
I prefer a meeting where there is no agenda and we discuss whatever comes up.				
I prefer a meeting where there is an agenda with specific issues.				
I prefer a meeting where speakers present issues and then we have a discussion.				
I prefer a meeting where there are a small group of people.				
I prefer meetings in the: 1☐ Morning 2☐ Afternoon 3☐ Evening 4☐ Weekends				
Meetings should be: 1☐ 1 hour 2☐ 2 hours 3☐ 3 hours 4☐ 4 hours				

Please check (√) one of the following.

3. LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES PREFERENCES	1 AGREE	2 DIS-AGREE	DOESN'T APPLY	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
Because of my difficulty with English, I would feel more comfortable if there was a translator at the meetings.				
Because of my difficulty with English, I would feel more comfortable if there was a separate meeting for my language group.				
Because of my difficulty with English, I would feel more comfortable having another resident from my ethnic group speak on my behalf.				
I would attend more meetings if the notices were translated into my own language.				

Section D:

Do you feel that MTHA/Greenwin/or Community Agencies are a barrier to your participation in the community? **If yes, please expand**. 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No
Do you have any suggestions or ideas how MTHA, Management and the residents can improve their working relationship in the community?

RESIDENT PARTICIPATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Name	Unit #	Telephone	Male / Female	Length of Residency	Age Group under 24=1 25-58=2 59+=3	Family Household A= C=	Languages Spoken	Languages Spoken at Home	Language of Corresponse	Interested in Participating	What is your race: Aborig.=1 Arab=2 Asian=3 Black=4 Filipino=5 Lat./Hisp=6 E. Asian=7 White=8	Comments / Suggestions

APPENDIX F

Section A:

Please check (✓) one of the following:

1. My view of Resident Participation is:

-1-	-2-	-3-	-4-	-5-
I don't want to participate in anything that happens at Flemingdon Park. ☐	I would like MTHA to provide the basic services. I would like them to keep me informed and consult with me only when needed. ☐	I would like to have a say in the services that MTHA offers. ☐	I would like to work with MTHA on issues that interest me. ☐	I would like to work closely with MTHA on all the issues that affect the quality of life in Flemingdon Park. ☐

2. In the last year I have attended:

- ☐ Most of the community meetings
- ☐ Some of the community meetings
- ☐ None of the community meetings

Section B:

Please check (✓) one of the following.

	1. PERSONAL REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING	1 AGREE	2 DIS-AGREE	3 DOESN'T APPLY	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
B1a	I feel that I'm too young to go to meetings.				
b	I feel that I'm too old to go to meetings.				
c	I feel it is my husband's/wife's role to go to meetings.				
d	I don't know all the people and I feel uncomfortable in large groups.				
e	My wife/husband doesn't want to participate therefore, I don't want to go to meetings alone.				
f	Meetings are too far for me to walk.				
g	I'm not interested in meeting my neighbours.				
h	I'm not interested in getting to know the community.				
i	I don't know my rights as a resident.				
j	I don't know where to obtain information about meetings.				
k	Meetings are not well organized.				
l	Nothing ever happens as a result of these meetings.				
m	I don't know enough about what's going on to make a valuable contribution.				

Please check (✓) one of the following.

	2. CHILDCARE REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING	1 AGREE	2 DIS-AGREE	3 DOESN'T APPLY	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
B2a	I can't afford to pay for someone to look after my children.				
b	I don't have anyone to care for my children.				
c	I can't attend because meetings conflict with the amount of time I have to spend with my children.				

	3. TIME AVAILABILITY REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING	1 AGREE	2 DIS-AGREE	3 DOESN'T APPLY	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
B3a	I can't find time because I work shifts.				
b	I can't attend because meetings conflict with my time for worship.				
c	Meetings are usually too long.				
d	I can't find time because I'm too busy with other activities inside Flemingdon Park.				
e	I can't find time because I'm involved with other activities outside Flemingdon Park.				

	4. LANGUAGE REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING	1 AGREE	2 DIS-AGREE	3 DOESN'T APPLY	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
B4a	I have difficulty understanding English.				
b	I'm not comfortable speaking English.				
c	I'm not comfortable reading English.				

Please check (✓) one of the following.

	5. CULTURE / ETHNICITY / RACE REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING	1 AGREE	2 DIS-AGREE	3 DOESN'T APPLY	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
B5a	In my culture meetings do not occur.				
b	I feel that I can't participate because in my culture women don't participate in activities.				
c	I feel intimidated at meetings because I'm from a different culture/ race/ ethnic group.				
d	I feel that my participation is not valued because I'm from a different cultural/ racial/ ethnic background.				
e	I feel that other residents don't accept my cultural dress.				
f	I feel that other residents don't accept my cultural beliefs.				
g	I don't like to be at meetings with residents of other cultural/ racial/ ethnic groups because of political differences.				
h	I don't like to be at meetings with residents of other cultural/ racial/ ethnic groups because of religious differences.				

Please check (√) one of the following.

	6. FEAR REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING	1 AGREE	2 DIS-AGREE	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
B6a	I'm afraid to walk to meetings at night.			
b	I'm afraid of the youth in the community.			
c	I'm afraid of some neighbours at the meetings.			
d	I'm afraid that my neighbours will hold what I say against me.			
e	I'm afraid that management staff will hold what I say against me.			
f	I'm afraid to participate in things that have to do with government.			
g	In the fall, some of you said that you didn't participate because of "Fear of Management and some Neighbours". Give me some examples of what you mean by this?			
h	If you could change two things about resident participation in your community, what would it be?			

Please check (✓) one of the following.

	7. OTHER REASONS REASONS FOR NOT PARTICIPATING	1 AGREE	2 DIS- AGREE	3 DOESN'T APPLY	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
B7a	I don't attend meetings because I feel that the community agencies that represent residents are not representing me.				
b	I don't attend meetings because the resident leaders in the community do not represent my needs.				
c	Other Reasons for not Participating (Please Describe):				

8. Please rank the **three** main reasons why you don't participate or get more involved in community meetings.

1 ❑ Personal reasons
2 ❑ Lack of childcare
3 ❑ Lack of time
4 ❑ Language barrier
5 ❑ Cultural/ethnic/racial reasons
6 ❑ Fear
7 ❑ Management
8 ❑ Uncomfortable with some residents
9 ❑ Little gets done
10 ❑ Other _____
11 ❑ Doesn't apply

Section C:

	1. YOUTH	1 AGREE	2 DIS- AGREE	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
C1a	I feel that youth are not encouraged to participate because their issues are not addressed.			
b	I feel that youth should have the opportunity to hold their own meetings to address issues that concern them.			
c	I would be interested in organizing and supporting the youth with their issues.			

Section D:

Please place a check (✓) beside the following questions.

1. COMMUNICATION

I find out about residents' meetings through

D1a ☐ word of mouth

b ☐ flyer in the mail room

c ☐ flyer on my unit door or on the exterior doors to my building

d ☐ flyer in my mail slot

e ☐ I'm not told about residents' meetings

f ☐ management office

g ☐ library

h ☐ resource center

i ☐ other service providers eg. Flemingdon Ministry, Legal Clinic

j ☐ other _____

k The best way to let me know about a meeting is _____

l I would need _____ days notice to inform me about community meetings

m The following logo is used for the residents' monthly meeting

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐

n The following logo is used for the Flemingdon Park Resident Participation Study

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3. ☐

O Do you find the logos useful?

1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

p The logos should

1 ☐ Stay the Same 2 ☐ Be Clearer 3 ☐ Be Simpler 4. ☐ Should not be used

Please check (✓) one of the following.

	2. MEANS OF COMMUNICATING PREFERENCES	1 AGREE	2 DIS-AGREE	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
D2a	I prefer that a neighbour who is familiar and trusted to knock on my door and tell me about meetings.			
b	I prefer that someone telephone me and tell me about meetings.			
c	I prefer to read a flyer to get information about meetings.			
d	I prefer to receive a letter in the mail informing me about meetings.			
e	Any preferences or suggestions how to better communicate with residents:			

Please check (✓) one of the following .

	3. MEETINGS PREFERENCES	1 AGREE	2 DIS-AGREE	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
D3a	I prefer a meeting where there is no agenda and we discuss whatever comes up.			
b	I don't like meetings. I rather get together as a group and discuss whatever comes up.			
c	Meetings are too formal. I prefer to gather with other residents and discuss specific issues.			
d	I prefer a meeting where there is an agenda with specific issues.			
e	I prefer a meeting where speakers present issues and then we have a discussion.			
f	I prefer a meeting where residents are divided into groups to discuss different issues.			
g	I prefer a meeting where there are a small group of people.			

h I prefer meetings in the:

1☐ Morning 2☐ Afternoon 3☐ Evening 4☐ Weekends

i Meetings should be:

1☐ 1 hour 2☐ 2 hours 3☐ 3 hours 4☐ 4 hours

j Who should come to the following:

		Residents	MTHA	Greenwin	Community Agencies	Police	Everyone
1	on-site management meetings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2	resident's association meetings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3	community social events	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Please check (√) one of the following.

	4. LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES PREFERENCES	1 AGREE	2 DIS-AGREE	3 DOESN'T APPLY	DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS?
D4a	Because of my difficulty with English, I would feel more comfortable if there was a translator at the meetings.				
b	Because of my difficulty with English, I would feel more comfortable if there was a separate meeting for my language group.				
c	Because of my difficulty with English, I would feel more comfortable having another resident from my ethnic group speak on my behalf.				
d	I would attend more meetings if the notices were translated into my own language.				
e	I feel that it is necessary to translate information into my own language.				
f	I prefer meetings with people from my own cultural/ racial/ ethnic group because we can communicate better with each other.				

Section E:

Do you feel that MTHA/Greenwin/or Community Agencies are a barrier to your participation in the community? **If yes, please expand**. 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No
Do you have any suggestions or ideas how we can get more residents involved in community activities or meetings?
Do you have any suggestions or ideas how we can better inform existing and new residents about management and operational issues?
Do you have any suggestions or ideas how MTHA, Management and the residents can improve their working relationship in the community?

APPENDIX H

Average length of residence of tenants is 6.72 years

Median length of residence is 4.70 years.

There are 521 units in total.

- Total number of row units - 332 units
- Total number of apartment units with access to elevators - 189 units

Average Vacancy Rate for Flemingdon Park is 1%.

Information Current as of Friday October 27, 1995.

Comment

Turnover rates are not available. We track length of residence and we can calculate vacancy rates by comparing number of active tenants (i.e.. tenants actually living in units) and the number of units available.

Caution should be used when quoting the vacancy rate. This rate may be reflective of a number of circumstances such as lack of demand for a particular unit type, maintenance to unit, etc.

Source: OHC Support Branch, October 1995

Toronto Sun, Thursday, September 12, 1996

Cops' lightning strikes dealers

6 drug suspects nabbed in blitzkrieg raids

By JONATHAN KINGSTONE
Toronto Sun

A small army of Metro Police officers went to war against Flemingdon Park drug dealers yesterday in two lightning raids called "Project Flintstone."

More than 75 officers looking for up to 20 dealers cuffed six suspects from two common areas in the mass of complexes in the Don Mills Rd.-Eglinton Ave. area at around dinner time.

The raids ended two months of planning by East Field Command officers, who dubbed the operation "Project Flintstone" because one of the targeted dealers is nicknamed 'Bam-Bam'.

Thirty drug trafficking and possession charges were laid. Police expect to issue warrants for more than a dozen other suspects today.

Officers — some wearing masks, others blue windbreakers clearly identifying them as police — quietly surrounded an open playing field which the dealers had claimed as their own and then stormed in.

Moments later and only a few hundred metres away, other officers, who poured out of a rental van, repeated the process in a courtyard of a Grenoble Dr. townhouse complex, where suspects were surprisingly ignorant of the earlier blitz.

Police, who carried photocopied pictures of known targets, chased and caught one man who ran onto the roof of a community centre.

Dealers said 'it's their turf'

Det. Keith Rogers, who led the operation, said the raids were prompted by "community concerns, and the general bad attitude by the drug dealers.

"Drug dealers have told police not to come up to the area, that it's their turf," Rogers said. "They (also) took the field away from the children. Nice city we're living in, huh?"

Residents of the area, long plagued by drugs, violence and death associated with the dealers, said yesterday's operation was long overdue.

"It's been really bad around here," said a 60-year-old woman, who, like others, was too fearful of reprisal to give her name.

"You'd step outside your door and see drug deals go down all the time."

Another resident said she won't let her two young children outdoors.

"It's like keeping your kids in prison," said the woman.

Her son, in his early teens, said he's been spat on and threatened.

Earl Dey, 27, Charles Wright, 37, Everton Hylton, 32, Trevor Cruise, 35, and Marlon Gore, 23, and Michael Piercey, 20, are facing drug trafficking and possession charges.

APPENDIX I

Toronto Star, Thursday, July 24, 1997

Flemingdon Park pulls together

Police station will help fight crime

BY LESLIE FERENC
STAFF REPORTER

Police, residents, business people and the local councillor are working together to make their east-end North York neighborhood better and safer.

This fall, a community police station will open in the heart of the community at Flemingdon Park Plaza. Local proponents are confident it will be the key to change in the troubled neighborhood.

Wedged into an area between Eglinton Ave. E., Don Mills Rd., The Don Valley Parkway and the border of East York, Flemingdon is a veritable United Nations, according to area Councillor Don Yuill.

"Whatever language is spoken in the world, it's here," he said. "The neighborhood is compact with a high concentration of people living mostly in highrise buildings. The population is transient, so it's hard to say just how many people live here."

They may be from diverse backgrounds, but they do have one thing in common — the desire to be involved in their neighborhood community to help improve it, Yuill said.

It's no secret Flemingdon has had a reputation as a high-crime area. Several years ago, foot patrols were beefed up and a community liaison committee was struck — a forum for residents, politicians, police and business people to discuss mutual concerns and come up with solutions.

All agreed that an important first step in making the area safer was an increased police presence and that a small local station would do the trick.

Flemingdon plaza was seen as the ideal location because it's already a gathering place for residents.

"It's centrally located, people will be more aware of us and we'll get a lot more done," said Metro police Constable Wendy Hopkins, one of four officers from 54 Division who will work out of the plaza office.

"Once people get used to the idea of seeing us and talking to us, they'll feel more comfortable.

"They won't feel intimidated because they'll know us and we'll know them. When that happens, relationships and trust will start to develop. Attitudes will change."

Setting up a police station takes money — it costs about $18,000 a year to rent an average store in the plaza — not readily available in the police budget.

So Peter and Albert Dai stepped in. They represent plaza owner Yorktown Investments and were eager to do something for the community that has supported them for many years.

The Dais recommended the company donate a vacant store for the police office and pay all expenses, including phones and utilities — a small fee for a priceless service, they said.

An in-house police station will certainly help reduce crime in the plaza, which will be good for business, the Dais said.

But the station will be as important for the safety and protection of residents throughout the community.

"We were willing to make this happen," Albert Dai said. "This is our community, too."

Several years ago, plaza tenants complained about a variety of crimes including theft, Dai said, adding many didn't report incidents to police, believing they wouldn't respond.

"I told them they weren't being fair to police," Albert Dai said, adding he explained that if the community didn't co-operate, the police couldn't do their job.

But changing attitudes wasn't easy.

A security firm was hired, but the brothers recognized that wouldn't solve the wider problems beyond the plaza.

When Ian Marcial of Lion Security Services began to work at the plaza, he found the relationship between residents and police strained.

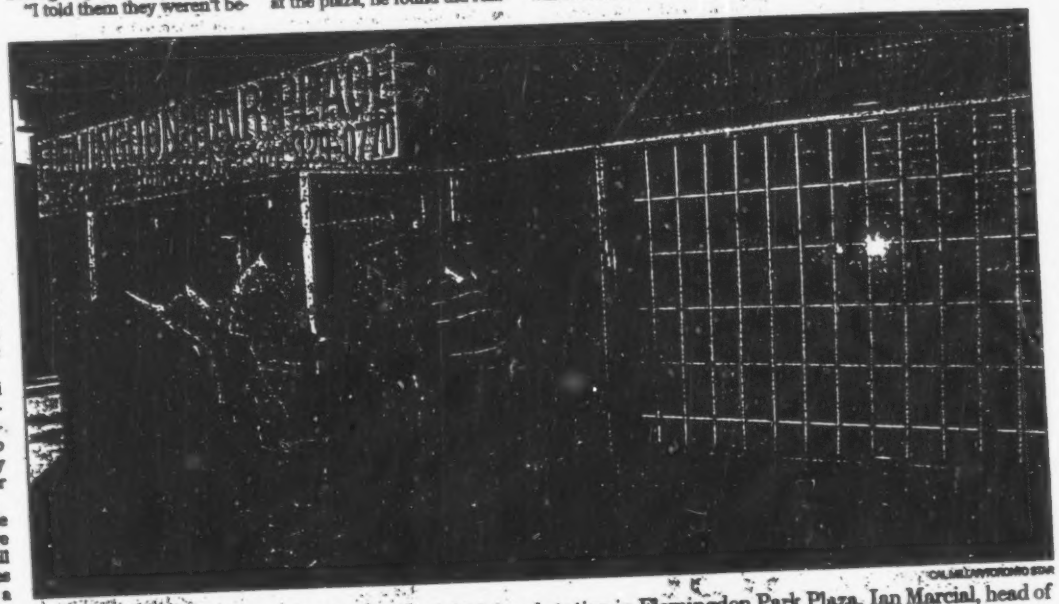
One reason was that many residents were new to Canada. In some of their homelands, the law was harsh, militaristic, even dictatorial and many people were afraid of police.

"Given the opportunity however, good relationships will develop and new attitudes emerge," he explained, adding the community police station will be a real boost for the area.

Police already are doing their part, said Marcial, who credits Staff Inspector William Fordham at 54 Division for his support of the community station.

Yuill, who has worked closely with plaza owners and residents to make the dream a reality, said the station will be the heart of the neighborhood and for the many young people in the area.

"There's a lot of great kids here," he said.



DAN MALAVOLTA/TORONTO STAR

NEW STATION: Metro police are setting up a neighborhood station in Flemingdon Park Plaza. Ian Marcial, head of plaza security, left, Peter Dai, councillor Don Yuill, Constable Wendy Hopkins and Albert Dai, check it out.

APPENDIX J

This is an important document. If you cannot read it, please have someone translate the contents for you immediately.

FRENCH	VOICI UN DOCUMENT TRES IMPORTANT. S'IL VOUS EST IMPOSSIBLE DE LE LIRE, S'IL VOUS PLAIT LE FAIRE TRADUIRE SANS DELAI.	CAMBODIAN
AMHARIC	ይህ ሞ ሠነድ ነው:: እንብብው የማይቸሉት ከሆነ ይህንን የማንበብ ሥራ ለሚችል ሰው በአስቸኳይ ያስተርጉሙት::	CHINESE
HINDI	यह एक बहुत जरूरी दस्तावेज है। यदि आप इसे न पढ़ सकें तो जल्दी से जल्दी इस का अनुवाद करवा लें।	TAMIL
ARABIC	هذا مستند هام. إذا لم تستطع قراءته رجاء ان تجعل شخص اخر يترجم لك محتواه فوراً.	TIGRINGA
LAOTIAN	ເອກະສານສະບັບນີ້ ສຳຄັນຫຼາຍ. ຖ້າທ່ານອ່ານບໍ່ໄດ້, ຂໍໃຫ້ທ່ານຊອກຫາຄົນມາແປໃຫ້ທ່ານທັນທີ ໂດຍ.	DARI
FARSI	این مدرك مهمی است. اگر نمی توانید انرا بخوانید. از شخص دیگری بخواهید که محتوی انرا فورا برای شما ترجمه نماید.	ITALIAN
PASHTO	دا یو مهم سند دی. که هغه ته هم لوستلای ه لطفا یې چا ته ورکړئ چې محتویات یې تاسو ته فورا ترجمه کړي.	POLISH
SOMALI	Tani waa dukumenti muhiim ah. Haddaad akhrin kari weydo, fadlan si dhakhso ah u raadi qof kuu tarjuma waryaabaha ku qoran.	SPANISH
THAI	นี้คือหนังสือสำคัญมาก ถ้าหากว่าคุณอ่านไม่ได้ โปรดหานายภาษามาแปลเอกสารนี้ ให้ คุณทันที	VIETNAMESE

APPENDIX K